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A HISTORY OF
THE BRITISH EMPIRE
IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY

VOL. I

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A HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

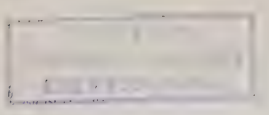
BY

MARCUS R. P. DORMAN, M.A.

VOL. I

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE TO THE DEATH OF PITT (1793–1805)

WITH SIX PHOTOGRAVURES



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PREFACE

The period dealt with in this volume is probably the most important in the history of Modern England, so no apology is needed for commencing a History of the Nineteenth Century at the year 1793. Indeed, it would be impossible either to describe the condition of the country in 1801, or to continue the narrative of the war with France, without some account of the events which occurred during the last few years of the eighteenth century.

The mine of historical wealth in the Foreign Records is by no means yet exhausted, and any one who has taken the trouble to compare the published documents with the original communications to and from the ambassadors and agents of England abroad, will realise how impossible it is to write the true history of this period from the former alone. A study of the original letters of Lord Malmesbury in 1796 cannot fail to produce an impression very different from that acquired by reading the correspondence as presented to Parliament, and even in the more extensive extracts published later by the biographer of that distinguished diplomat some points of great importance are omitted. The rupture with Spain is more easily understood after a perusal of the correspondence with the Earl of Bute, which shows clearly that at this date the British Ministers were distrusted almost as much as the Continental Courts of Europe. We know now that this distrust was unwarranted, for, as the true facts are, one by one, brought to light, it becomes more and more evident that the British Governments endeavoured to act in a plain and straightforward way with their allies against the common enemy. Some new light is also thrown on the action of Prussia before the

Treaty of Basle, but the main fact remains that that unfortunate country was always, so to speak, between the devil and the deep sea, and had neither the moral or physical strength to struggle against either. Again, the negotiations leading to the Preliminary Articles of Peace, before the Treaty of Amiens, when studied in the original, prove far more clearly than the published extracts that the British Government never for one moment intended to evacuate Malta unless the most certain guarantees existed that it should not again fall into the hands of the French. These guarantees were not forthcoming, and thus the island remained an English possession; but, although there can be no doubt, according to the strict letter of the treaty, that it was legal to refuse to surrender it, it is equally certain that it was very bad policy not to word the treaty more distinctly so that the First Consul could have had no grounds for complaint. Evidence is also given here showing that the Czar of Russia was more active in instigating the third coalition than was Mr. Pitt.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Marquess of Salisbury, K.G., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to her late Majesty, Queen Victoria, for permission to examine the Foreign Office Records, and to the Lords' Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury for permission to examine the records of that office.

M. R. P. D.

London, 1902.

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A HISTORY OF
THE BRITISH EMPIRE

CHAPTER I

The Government in 1792—Characters of Pitt and Lord Grenville—Fox, Burke, and the Reform party—English sedition—A Royal Proclamation—The French National Assembly—Death of Mirabeau—Change of tone in French Government—War between France and Austria—Proclamation of Brunswick—Lord Gowers recalled—Retreat of the Prussians—Further French successes—Designs of Russia and Austria on Poland—Debate in House of Commons on the question of war—Pitt still hesitates—Convention declare war—Treason of Dumouriez—Carnot and the Committee of Public Safety—Expedition of the Duke of York—Toulon and Admiral Hood—Nelson in Corsica. Naval action of June 1, 1794—Colonial Expedition in 1793 and 1794. English retreat from Holland—Austrians defeated—Effects of war to the end of 1794.

In 1792 the Government of England consisted of men Tory by name but imbued with several Whig instincts, pacific by desire but destined to be driven into hostilities, wishing for retrenchment and reform but forced by events to quadruple the National Debt, to curtail the liberties of the people, and to postpone reform for forty years. The revolutionary principles which were now beginning to assume some tangible shape amid the chaos of the French Revolution, met with no sympathy from the English Ministers, but Pitt was very adverse to interfering with the internal affairs of France, and was so convinced that peace could be maintained that he reduced the naval forces by 2000 men, and the cost of the military establishment by £200,000 a year. On the other hand, he was never in favour of tyranny, and had little admiration for those methods of French Government which had terminated in the fatal political outburst. Nor did he approve of the policy which had lost to England the North American colonies, and had characterised the war 1792.

1792. as "accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust and diabolical."[1] Lord Grenville, leader of the Peers, and Foreign Secretary at this date, had no feeling but contempt for the body of political upstarts and rebels who attempted to manage the affairs of the French nation, and was actuated far more than his chief by the idea that it was the duty of the Courts of Europe to support the cause of monarchy in France. These were the two men who were chiefly responsible for the foreign policy of England, but the forces which led to war were so great that whoever had been in power the result must have been the same.

In the House of Commons the Prime Minister was opposed by Fox on questions of high Governmental prerogative, but received his support in many economical schemes, and in his attempts to abolish the slave trade. Burke, the impassioned, rhetorical, idealistic and imaginative writer and speaker, had now quarrelled with Fox, and assumed an almost superstitious horror for revolution, and the excesses of the French, while his criticisms of the actions of monarchs and princes were entirely hushed. His great work on the French Revolution appealed to the emotions of the whole country, and had far more effect outside the House of Commons than his speeches had inside.

The Reform party consisted of Fox, Sheridan, Lord Grey, and Lord Lauderdale, leader of the party in the Upper House; Pitt also was not opposed to reform in principle, but thought the present time inopportune. In the country were various seditious clubs corresponding with the French Government, and disseminating fiery revolutionary literature. Time has proved that their bark was noisy but their bite was not dangerous, but Pitt considered it necessary to advise a Royal
1792. May. Proclamation which was issued on May 21st, warning all "our loving subjects" against "divers wicked and seditious writings."[2] The measures instituted against these societies will be described later, and the Government has been more or less blamed by historians since,[3] but undoubtedly the fact

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. i. p. 61.

[2] *Annual Register*, 1792. Part ii. p. 158.

[3] Macaulay blames Pitt for the harsh measures he instituted, and concludes, "He lived to be held up to obloquy as the stern oppressor of England and the indefatigable disturber of Europe" ("Miscellaneous Writings," vol. ii.

that such distinct evidence existed of discontent must have affected their foreign policy.

England had every reason to avoid war if possible, and 1790. it was also to the interest of France to remain on friendly terms. In 1790, indeed, when England and Spain were disputing over the Nootka Sound, Mirabeau and Montmorin used their influence to cause Spain to yield, and there can be no doubt that the state of the finances, the corn riots and the indiscipline in the French army, forbade at this time all thoughts of aggression. The National Assembly, however, intended to be prepared for any eventuality, and ordered forty-five ships of the line, with a proportionate number of frigates and small vessels, to be prepared for service. Unfortunately on April 2, 1791, Mirabeau died, and there was no one left capable of acting as a curb on the Jacobin party, which then became dominated by Robespierre, Pethion, Buzot and Prieur. The tone of the French Government at once changed. Austria and Spain were approached in haughty and arrogant language, and were asked in a categorical manner whether they intended to live in good 1792. intelligence with France, and to renounce all treaties and April. conventions contrary to the sovereignty and independence of their nation. A deputation from the National Assembly next desired King Louis to demand an answer to these questions from the Emperor of Germany, and stated that unless he gave the nation full and entire satisfaction before March 1, his silence would be construed as a declaration of war. The French had thus thrown down the gauntlet to Austria, but still had a most earnest desire to be upon the best possible terms with England, for the Assembly believed that if she would remain neutral France could cope with the rest of Europe united.[1]

These sanguine expectations were destined not to be fulfilled, for, on the opening of the campaign on the Flemish frontier, the French suffered a reverse. Emboldened by

pp. 347–348). Lord Rosebery, on the other hand, lays the blame on the public: "The public in its terror called for more and more, Parliament passed every repressive measure with something like acclamation; it was not the coercion of a people by the Government, it was the coercion of the Government by the people."—"Life of Pitt."

[1] April 22, 1792 (from Gower's Despatches from France).

1792. April. this, Prussia then united its forces with those of Austria, and in July sent the Duke of Brunswick with 40,000 men along the Moselle. In the names of the Emperor and King of Prussia, Brunswick at once issued a proclamation to the French stating that if any violence was offered to the King, Queen, or Royal family, Paris should be delivered up to military execution.

In this spirit did the German powers commence the war. A confidence, generated by contempt for an adversary who did not adopt the methods of Government sacred to existing authorities, actuated them, and no one doubted that the allies could carry out their threats. Statesmen, politicians, and soldiers could not conceive of the possibility of a mob, guided by lawyers, writers, and other theoretical people, organising a system of Government, and putting an army into the field, generalled by waiters and tailors, which could compete successfully with troops trained with all the pomp and ceremony peculiar to tradition.

August. England saw no reason to alter her attitude, but in August recalled Lord Gowers, the British Ambassador in Paris, on the ground that his credentials to his Most Christian Majesty, from whom had been removed all executive power, were no longer available. This action was not, however, intended as a threat of war, for it was expressly stated, "His Majesty judges it proper on this account, as well as most conformable to the principles of neutrality which his Majesty has hitherto observed, that you should no longer remain at Paris."

King Louis indeed had now not a vestige of power remaining, and had left the Tuileries when the Parisian mob, inflamed by the oratory of Danton, had attacked it. The troops at first resisted, and shot down a hundred and fifty rebels before an order reached them to evacuate the palace. The King was still their master, and to him they owed obedience, but, in spite of the excesses of the Revolution, and the irrational measures that Danton and the party of the Mountain forced upon the Girondins, every soldier who joined the French army in 1792 was fired with enthusiasm, and imagined that not as a conscript but as a volunteer he was fighting for his country and his liberty.[1] The tide of

[1] See Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, vol. iii. p. 446.

war was soon to flow in favour of France, for although the fortresses of Longwy and Verdun had fallen after a short resistance, the position assumed by General Dumouriez, who now conducted the defence, was too strong to be taken by the Prussians. Their king indeed began to listen to the French General's proposals for peace, and after a week of negotiations, which aggravated the scarcity of supplies and sickness among the Germans, a retreat was ordered, and the veteran forces of Brunswick retired before the new generals of the Revolution. 1792. September.

This retreat altered the political outlook. Prussia, who had expected to be in Paris by the middle of October, was checked and confused;[1] England now instructed her Ambassador at Berlin, Sir Morton Eden, to inquire into the nature of the plan which had been acted upon by the Courts of Vienna and Berlin relative to the affairs of France, and of their views with respect to the termination of the war.[2]

In France the crisis had arrived. The Monarchy had been overthrown on August 10th, the Legislative Assembly had dissolved itself, and the Convention met, filled with fiery ardour against all courts and nobles, and burning with desire to force its principles upon all. Along the frontiers from Dunkirk to the Alps the neighbours of the French were, for the most part, small nations or provinces, far more susceptible to revolutionary teaching than are large and powerful empires. The new doctrines therefore met with a welcome in Savoy and Switzerland, with the result that on October 20th the French General Custine, who had crossed the Alsatian frontier, was received by the inhabitants of Mainz as a friend, the garrison capitulating without firing a shot.[3] Three weeks later Dumouriez defeated the Austrians at Jemappes, which caused them to abandon the Netherlands without any further struggle, and a week afterwards Savoy November.

[1] Letter from Sir Morton Eden to Lord Grenville, October 2, 1792. F. O. Records, Prussia, 26.

[2] Grenville to Eden, November 13, 1792. "Now that the French army has been successful in Flanders, considerations arise of common interest to his Majesty and the King of Prussia, and so he wishes to be more particularly acquainted than he now is with the situation and views of the Court of Berlin." F. O. Records, Prussia, 26.

[3] See also account of the moral and political situation in Belgium at this date. Thiers, tome iii. p. 120.

1792. November. and Nice were annexed to France. With the rash confidence of youth and inexperience the Convention now decreed that in every country occupied by the French armies the existing authorities should be abolished; and that nobility, serfage, feudal rights and monopolies should be replaced by the sovereignty of the people, acting through Assemblies to which no member of the former Governments should be admitted.

In spite of these early successes the statesmen of Europe were still imbued with the idea that the new forces could be easily subdued, and Prussia answered the English queries by stating that nothing had been settled at Vienna except a most determined intention to pursue the war. The concert of Europe was indeed tuned against republicanism, but in reality a new partition of Poland chiefly interested the Courts of Berlin, St. Petersburg and Vienna, while Spain openly announced her intention of recognising the French republic. England suspected this design on Poland, but when Eden asked Schulenburg the destination of Prussia's new armament, and stated that the fate of Poland would alarm his Majesty's Ministers, he merely answered: "Can we remain quiet and let Russia act as she pleases,"[1] and a few weeks after he stated that he feared the Empress, whom they were urging to take part in the war against France, would prove embarrassing.[2]

December. Public opinion in England had now been inflamed to a pitch of dangerous excitement by the atrocities of the French Revolution, and the intrigues with the English parties of Reform, and not only were the aristocracy and Tory party as a whole in favour of war, but the Whig followers of Burke were also prepared to support them. The opinion of the House of Commons in December 1792 was well brought out both in the debate on the address of Thanks on the 13th, and also in the discussion following the motion of Fox two days later, that a Minister should be sent to Paris to treat with the French Government.[3] Fox urged that it was not our business to inquire how that Government was constituted, and that every effort ought to be made to avert hostilities. Lord

[1] Eden to Grenville, November 23, 1792. F. O. Records, Prussia, 26.
[2] Ibid., December 13, 1792.
[3] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. p. 80.

Sheffield reprobated the idea of sending a Minister; and stated that the surest means of avoiding a war was to prepare for it.[1] Mr. Thomas Stanley thought that if "the distempered parts of the people once understood that there were men capable and ready to make and support such propositions they would go into open insurrection, and shake the peace of the Empire." Mr. Taylor argued that we had nothing to gain and everything to lose by a war with France, but Mr. Liveden considered the motion to be an indirect attack on the Ministers, and an improper interference with the Executive.[2] Mr. Grey seconded the motion, and asked that it should be shown that it was our duty to keep the Scheldt shut for the Dutch, and that we had done everything in our power to make an amicable arrangement with the French. 1792. December.

Mr. Frederick North followed Mr. Liveden in the idea that the motion was an attack on Ministers, but Colonel Tarleton did not think Great Britain was so deeply concerned in Continental transactions as to be obliged to go to war.[3] Mr. Jenkinson opposed, and did not think there was any cause for despondency in the possibility of a contest with France, with her revenues almost annihilated, and with the probability now of our having Spain as an ally. With prophetic insight this gentleman continued: "What is it then that gentlemen would propose to their Sovereign? To bow his neck to a band of sanguinary ruffians, and address our ambassador to a set of regicides." Mr. Francis, on the other hand, thought that nothing was to be gained and everything to be lost by war. The Master of the Rolls then declared that a motion of a more dangerous and pernicious tendency had never been made in Parliament, and asked whether this was the time to send an ambassador to negotiate with the President of the Convention, who it was known had received in a public manner persons from this country declaring their hostility to its Government.[4] Mr. Windham thought it would degrade us to negotiate with France, and Sir William Young opined that the motion had a "savouring of national cowardice or treachery, a mean and timid petition

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. p. 81.
[2] Ibid., p. 82.
[3] Ibid., pp. 85–86.
[4] Ibid., p. 99.

1792. December. to France." Mr. Whitbread supported the motion, but Mr. Grant opposed it because the French had violated the Scheldt.[1] Burke congratulated the younger members who had spoken against the growing evils, and hoped there "might be an eternal succession of talents and principles adverse to these new French doctrines." He strongly opposed the motion, although he wished hostilities might be avoided, but "if our just resentment were fulminated against the assassins who offered us the comforts of fire and sword, a civil war might be prevented in England."[2] Mr. Courtenay agreed with Fox, but Sir James Murray opposed the motion. Sheridan was willing to support the executive in a war of defence, but would never agree that one English guinea should be spent, or one drop of British blood be shed, to restore the ancient despotism of France.[3] Dundas argued on the Government principles as enunciated by Mr. Erskine, and Fox concluded by stating that he did not wish to send an ambassador to petition but to demand satisfaction, and if that was denied to return at once.[4] Pitt was not present at this debate, but the Government easily carried the House with them, and the motion was negatived.

These extracts show clearly that the majority in the House of Commons not only regarded the French Government with horror and contempt, but considered also that the nation need not fear the effects of any war which such a Government could wage. In fact, although the belief in the divine rights of kings influenced the English people far less than the inhabitants of such countries as Austria and Russia at this period, there was a strong and healthy attachment to the monarchical form of Government, and a distrust and contempt for revolutionary ideas. It is indeed conceivable that at this time the French monarchists might have desired war with England, in the hope of creating a counter revolution, but it seemed sheer madness for the National Convention to risk an encounter; and yet Brissot, in his official report from the Comité Diplomatique, stated that France as a powerful Republic had been grossly insulted, that treaties

November.

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. p. 105.
[2] Ibid., p. 109.
[3] Ibid., p. 118.
[4] Ibid., p. 126.

had been infringed and broken by the Court of St. James, that the Republic ought to insist on the repeal of the Aliens' Bill, and the Bill respecting the paper currency of France, and the revocation of the embargo laid upon a variety of ships in different ports of England and Ireland, laden with corn for France. The French Minister in London was therefore directed to insist upon a prompt answer to the above specific demands, but in the meantime Monsieur Chauvelin had been told that he was acknowledged in England in no other character than that of Minister of his Most Christian Majesty, and that he could not be admitted to treat with the King's Government in the quality assumed by him of Minister from the French Republic.[1] This communication was sent to him before January 4th, proving that he was officially unrecognised in London before the execution of King Louis, who was not sentenced to death until the 17th, so that his dismissal cannot be attributed to the effects of that crime on the English Government.

1792. November.

1793. January.

Meanwhile from Berlin came assurances that Prussia intended to restore the monarchical form of Government in France, and hopes that England would become a party to the war. In Russia also the English Minister was asked by Count Osterman what was the condition of the naval preparations of England, and was impressed with the fact that it was now impossible for his Britannic Majesty to avoid taking a part in the war, since the French General had not only forced the passage of the Scheldt, but had entered the Duchy of Guilders.[2] But Pitt, although continually urged by the Powers to join in the league against France, still hesitated to advise the King to declare war, for even if France had violated the treaties regulating the navigation of the Scheldt, that was chiefly a question between that nation and the Dutch. Pitt, indeed, was extremely anxious to avoid war, and to reconcile France and Austria, so that the Western Powers could combine against Catherine of Russia, in order

[1] Letter to Sir Morton Eden, January 4, 1793. F. O. Records, Prussia, 27.

[2] Mr. Whitworth to Lord Grenville, St. Petersburg, January 8, 1793. The letter thus continues: "It is obvious here they consider the interference of Great Britain necessary to save them from the danger of a French fleet in the Black Sea." F. O. Records, Russia, 24.

793. to frustrate her designs on Turkey and Poland, nor was he ignorant of the intentions of Prussia and Austria also to aggrandise themselves at the expense of Poland if possible.[1]

ebruary st. But whatever may have been the advantages of peace at this time, and however strongly Pitt may have personally wished for it, the execution of Louis roused a feeling of horror, disgust, and fury throughout the country, and a rupture was then merely a question of days. The Convention anticipated it by declaring war on Great Britain and Holland on February 1, 1793, and before the end of the summer of that year Spain, Portugal, Naples, Tuscany, and the Papal States had also joined in the coalition.

England at once formed an alliance with Prussia and Austria to wage war against France, unless the Convention agreed to evacuate within two months all the territories which had been won, and promised not to interfere with the internal affairs of other countries, or to commit acts of hostility against them. This was the ostensible motive of the Courts of Europe, but their real intentions and hopes were quite different, for each was seeking territorial aggrandisement at the expense of its weakest neighbour, and although England strongly objected to the aggression of Russia, Prussia, and Austria on Poland, the Government had no intention of opposing it actively.[2]

Catherine, Queen of domestic and political coquettes, at this moment was pleased with the action of the Emperor Francis, but he, wishing for something more reliable than protestations, insisted that her Imperial Majesty should furnish a considerable corps of troops in the spring, and should not consent to any pacification until the French were obliged to abandon all their conquests in the Low Countries.[3] This was not altogether pleasing to Russia, who had no particular wish to wage war on France, although loudly refusing

[1] Letters from Sir Morton Eden, January 19, 1793. When Eden asked if troops of his Prussian Majesty would be withdrawn from Poland when the condition of the country no longer was a cause of apprehension, Count Finckanstein refused to give him a satisfactory answer. F. O. Records, Prussia, 27.

[2] To Eden, February 6, 1793. F. O. Records, Prussia, 27.

[3] From Whitworth to Grenville, January 8, 1793. F. O. Records, Russia, 24.

to negotiate with a nation in a state of active rebellion. At the same time the Empress signed a partition treaty (on January 24th) with Berlin, by which it was agreed that Russia should have such an extent of territory in Poland as would produce 2,600,000 souls, while Prussia should have Great Poland up to the suburbs of Warsaw, and Austria the district and city of Cracow.[1] Poland was, indeed, of far greater interest to the Court of St. Petersburg than France, but the Empress expressed great grief and indignation when the news of the execution of Louis reached her, and was extremely pleased when the Convention declared war on England, since she feared some pacific system might yet be arranged.[2] 1793. February

In politics prescience has no place, but at no date in the history of the world have the hopes and predictions of statesmen been so falsified as during the period we are now considering. France mistook the agitation of a few reformers in England for a desire for revolution, England and the other powers thought it would be an easy matter to crush the revolutionary army of France, Russia considered the preoccupation of the western powers would enable her to pursue her designs against Poland and Turkey, and both Austria and Prussia considered it an excellent opportunity to aggrandise themselves. Each was wrong, and each paid dearly for the error. 1793. March.

Preparations for war were at once commenced, and in March Russia notified to England that she would send a Russian squadron to act with her against the common enemy, but the British Government preferred land troops, which the Empress would not send unless England consented to grant a subsidy for them.[3] France herself was by no means unanimous, for General Dumouriez was now scheming to betray the Republic, whose servant he was, and to restore the Monarchy, for which purpose he entered into a formal convention with the Prussians in February, and asked for an army to carry out his plans. All this was communicated to the English Minister at Berlin,[4] but the French

[1] From Whitworth to Grenville, January 27, 1793. F. O. Records, Russia, 24.

[2] Ibid., March 1, 1793. F. O. Records, Russia, 24.

[3] Grenville to Whitworth, March 26, 1793. F. O. Records, Russia, 14.

[4] Elliot to Grenville, February 23, 1793. F. O. Records, Prussia, 27.

1793. March. Convention, having no idea of the treason of their General, ordered him from Holland to fight the Austrians, and an action took place at Neerwinden on March 18th, when the French suffered such a severe reverse that the whole of Flanders was laid open to the forces of the allies.[1] Dumouriez now proposed to the Austrian Commander to unite with him in an attack on the Convention, but his treason was detected, and he fled with a few officers and men to the Austrian lines, April. under the fire of his own troops. At the same time Custine was overpowered in the Palatinate, and all the French conquests of the previous autumn were lost except Mainz, whilst in France itself civil war broke out, the Departments taking up arms against Paris.

In spite of these reverses and internal troubles the Republic rapidly grew in wealth and strength, while its enemies were splitting their allied strength in the pursuit of their own ends. Austria now claimed annexations in France and Alsace, but was strongly opposed by Prussia, and the Emperor was so furious at the terms of the partition treaty that Catherine of Russia thought best to repudiate it. She would not, however, consent to admit Austria into Poland, being prepared to employ every means short of actual hostilities to prevent it, although she heartily concurred in any other aggrandisement either in Bavaria or at the expense of France.[2] England, also, did not object to Austria claiming annexations in Northern France as well as Alsace, and stated that her own indemnity must be sought for in the foreign settlements and colonies of France.[3]

Carnot was now head of the Committee of Public Safety, which had usurped absolute power, and appointed delegates with unlimited authority in the Departments. Robespierre, Danton, Carnot and a few others indeed ruled everything, the Ministers being merely ciphers, while the Generals in the army obeyed absolutely the delegates. This Committee of regicides, not content with wielding absolute power at home, even conceived the wild scheme of attempting to arouse a revolution in England, in this manner affecting the

[1] Thiers, tome iii. p. 318; tome iv. p. 6.
[2] Whitworth to Grenville, May 31, 1793. F. O. Records, Russia, 24.
[3] See Fyffe's "History of Modern Europe," vol. i. p. 77.

army.[1] Such an idea stamped them as amateur politicians, but in one respect at least Carnot showed he possessed the greatest and most useful of all characteristics of a successful administrator, namely that of discovering and applying talent. Massena, Moreau, Murat, and Jourdan were all found by the indefatigable conductor of the war, and each one became a famous general, although none had been trained as officers. The forces of the allies being scattered about, seeking their own ends, the brunt of the war now fell upon the Austrians and English, the latter of whom numbered about 10,000, and were under the command of the Duke of York, whose chief qualification for the post was that he was the son of the King. Having landed at Ostend he was joined by the Prince of Coburg, the two commanders being opposed by General Dampierre, the successor of Dumouriez, who had taken up a well chosen defensive position in front of Valenciennes. His military skill was, however, of little use to him, for he was ordered forward by the Committee, and attacked on the 1st, and again on the 8th of May, but was repulsed on both occasions, on the latter being mortally wounded. The allied chiefs now held a Council of War, and both General Clerfayt and the Duke of York strongly advocated an immediate advance to Paris, but the Prince of Coburg and General Mack were unwilling to leave the border fortresses unreduced behind them. The former, therefore, proceeded to invest Cambray and Le Quesnoy, while the Duke of York led his forces to the siege of Dunkirk. It was on the latter that the first heavy blow descended. Carnot, perceiving that the Prussians were not likely to advance from the Moselle, withdrew 30,000 troops from that border of France and hurled them against York. Ably commanded by Houchard, they soon drove in the German army of observation under Marshal Freytag and the Prince of Orange, and forced them to fall back on Dunkirk, where the English were endeavouring to carry on the siege without a sufficient supply of breeching guns. York was therefore obliged to raise the siege and retreat, after abandoning his heavy artillery. The Prince of Coburg, also, was no more success-

1793. May.

[1] Secret information from an unknown correspondent in Switzerland. F. O. Records, France.

1793. October. ful, being defeated by Jourdan, who forced him to raise the siege of Maubeuge, and to fall back behind the Sambre.

The republic, now free from its external enemies, carried on the civil war with the most terrible ferocity, compelling Lyons to surrender in October, and butchering hundreds of its citizens in cold blood.[1] To escape a similar fate Toulon threw itself into the hands of the English, and proclaimed King Louis XVII.; the town was consequently at once besieged from the land, but with no effect, while the harbour was occupied by the British Admiral Hood, and the French fleet which had been handed over to him by the Royalists. It was at this siege that the name was first heard which was to be in the mouth of the whole civilised world for the next quarter of a century, Napoleon Bonaparte, a young captain of artillery, who took an active part in the capture of a ridge which commanded the harbour, and thus forced Hood to put out to sea with his fleet, after he had destroyed the French ships, which he was compelled to leave behind him.[2]

1794. May. While statesmen were intriguing, and troops were suffering reverses, the British tars were successfully engaged in the sea fights and colonial warfare, which at once commenced on each side of the globe. In the early months of the year a force was sent under Admiral Hood, commander of the Mediterranean fleet, to Corsica, and 1200 troops and 250 seamen, under Colonel Villettes and Captain Nelson, were landed on April 3rd to undertake the siege of Bastia, for the purpose of driving the French from Corsica. The work was carried on with such success that the garrison opened negotiations on the 19th, and capitulated on the 21st. This was followed up in July by the siege of Calvi, which was subjected to so furious a bombardment that after ten days practical breaches were formed, and on August 10th the place surrendered. It was in this siege that Nelson was wounded in the eye.[3]

Another great sailor, Lord Howe, in command of the

[1] Thiers, vol. iv. pp. 192–193.

[2] Many historians give the entire credit to Bonaparte for this important capture, but the evidence seems to disprove this. See "Life of Napoleon I.," by Holland Rose, vol. i. p. 50.

[3] Sir H. Nicolas' "Nelson's Letters and Despatches," vol. i. p. 377 *et seq.*; James' "Naval History of Great Britain," vol. i. p. 186 *et seq.*

Channel Fleet, had met the French Admiral with 27 sail of the line and one frigate on May 28th, and attacking them, gained a decided advantage, the *Revolutionnaire*, after losing her mizenmast, striking her colours. On June 1st, off Ushant, the action was renewed when the signal was made for each ship to pass through the enemy's line and engage the ships from to leeward in order to make the engagement decisive. At 9.30 A.M. the *Queen Charlotte* with Lord Howe led the fleet, making for the larboard quarter of the *Montagne*, and sailing close under her stern, poured into her a tremendous broadside, then closing alongside continued the cannonade. In the meantime the *Jacobin* had become almost becalmed on the opposite quarter of the *Queen Charlotte*, and Howe was soon firing his larboard guns with great effect into her. After about forty minutes both the French ships endeavoured to set sail and escape, but the Admiral promptly gave the order for a general chase. The *Queen Charlotte* was then attacked by the *Juste*, and her fore topmast was shot away, followed soon after by her main topmast. At this time the *Queen* was lying crippled, and Howe ordered the ships of the fleet to close and form in line ahead and abreast of her, but the French Admiral Villaret, seeing this, ceased his attack and stood on in order to cover and cut off four of his dismasted ships. At 2.30, six of the French ships, the *Sans Pareil*, *Juste*, *America*, *Impetueux*, *Northumberland*, and *Achille*, were secured, and some hours later the *Vengeur* was also captured, but in such a shattered state that in a few minutes she sank. The total loss of the British in killed and wounded was 1148, and on the French side about 3000 were killed and mortally wounded, while their total loss with prisoners amounted to 7000 men.[1]

1794. May.

1794. June 1st.

Immediately on the news of war reaching the most distant parts of the world, the forces of the two great powers became hotly engaged, the local Governors and Commanders at once seizing any island or harbour from which the enemy could be dislodged. In North America the first act of hostility was the capture of the small fishing islands of St. Pierre and Miguelon, which were surrendered unconditionally on May 14th.

[1] James' "Naval History of Great Britain," vol. i. 153.

1793. September. In the West Indies Major General Cuyler embarked from Barbadoes on April 12th, and arrived in Great Courland Bay, Tobago, two days after, with a small force of 470 officers and men. Next day the French Commandant, M. Monteil, having refused to surrender, an assault was carried out and the enemy's works were entered. The attack on Martinique, undertaken in conjunction with some French Royalists, was not, however, such a success, and the invading force was compelled to re-embark on their ships after being ashore for a week.

In the island of St. Domingo when the war broke out were a numerous party anxious to throw themselves upon British protection. Accordingly Commodore Ford, the naval commander-in-chief at Jamaica, was despatched with a force to Jérémie, and was received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of joy and fidelity. On September 22nd, the town of Cape-Nicola-Mole was also surrendered to the British, who thus came into possession, without firing a shot, of one of the finest harbours in the West Indies, guarded by batteries with upwards of a hundred pieces of heavy cannon. At the other side of the globe fighting was also proceeding. Immediately the news of the war reached Calcutta and Bengal in June measures were taken to capture the various French factories in this quarter, and most yielded without resistance. The Governor of the important fortress of Pondicherry, however, varied the monotony by refusing to do so. It was therefore necessary to bombard the place, and after two days, the guns being silenced, the enemy capitulated on August 23rd, and the garrison became prisoners of war.[1]

1794. February. Preparations were now hurried on for another attack on Martinique, and at the end of January 1794 Vice Admiral Sir John Jervis arrived at Barbadoes as naval commander-in-chief, accompanied by Sir Charles Grey in command of 7000 troops. The expedition at once sailed from Bridgetown, arrived off Martinique on February 5th, and by March 16th the whole island, except the forts Bourbon and Royal, was in the possession of the British. On the 17th fire was opened upon the forts, and on the 20th an assault was made

[1] James' "Naval History of Great Britain," vol. i. p. 120.

upon the town of Port Royal with perfect success. M. Rochambeau at Fort Bourbon now sued for terms, and two days later the British colours were hoisted there also, the name being changed to Fort George. Martinique being reduced and garrisoned with British the island of St. Lucie was next assaulted, and surrendered on April 4th.[1] 1794. February.

The next island to claim attention was Guadaloupe, and on June 10th some ships of war and transports arrived in Gosier Bay. The following day a landing was effected, and the strong post of Fleur d'Epee was stormed and carried, leading to the abandonment of Fort St. Louis and the town of Pointe à Pitre, from which many of the inhabitants escaped in boats.

Meanwhile the three small islands called the Saintes were captured without any loss. A garrison was now left at Fleur d'Epee, and the remainder of the troops landed at Petit Bourg. A fortnight later, after two or three batteries had been carried with no great loss, General Collet surrendered to Great Britain Guadaloupe and its dependencies. But the fortune of war was now to change, for on the 3rd of June a squadron of nine French ships appeared and commenced disembarking troops at the village of Gosier, and on the 6th a strong force of republicans commenced their march against Fleur d'Epee, from which the small English garrison were forced to retreat and to embark for Grande Terre.[2] The last week in June was occupied by a series of skirmishes, and on July 2nd the British made an unsuccessful attempt upon the town of Pointe à Pitre, which led to the withdrawal of the British forces from Grande Terre. The French then remained quiet until September 27th, when, having received a considerable reinforcement from Europe, they attacked the British camp at Berville, and once again became masters of the whole island.[3] This concluded the naval operations of 1794, but in the meantime important events had been transpiring on the Continent. June.

The Court of Berlin at length realising that it was being made a tool of by Russia to further its ends in Poland,

[1] James' "Naval History of Great Britain," vol. i. p. 215 *et seq.*
[2] Ibid., p. 221.
[3] Ibid., p. 216 *et seq.*

1794. June. and that Prussian interests were opposed to those of Austria, wished to withdraw from the alliance, but Pitt and Grenville persuaded the King to furnish 60,000 troops, under General Mollendorf, in return for a subsidy. It was undoubtedly Pitt's intention to utilise these troops for the defence of Belgium, but Mollendorf insisted upon guarding Mainz, and nothing in the treaty gave England the right to order them to any particular place. This action of Prussia is usually condemned by English writers, but it must be remembered that in these early days the necessity to crush France was by no means an object of the first importance to any Power except England. It would, indeed, not have been very extraordinary if Prussia at this time had thrown the whole of her strength against Russian aggression.

In June Pichegru marched the French army of the North towards the Flemish coast, and defeated York and the English troops at Turcoing, which was followed by several indecisive encounters with the allies on the Sambres, terminating in the defeat of Coburg by Jourdan at Fleurus. Austria now showed that she was indifferent to the fate of the Netherlands, and in spite of the remonstrances of Pitt, the army fell back beyond the Meuse. York, forsaken by his allies, retired northward, and Pichegru entered Antwerp the master of the whole of the Netherlands. By this time the true objects of the continental Powers were known not only to the Ministers but also to the commanders in the field, and the Duke of York did not attempt to conceal his feelings on the subject. Thus the subsidies granted by England only resulted in some useless engagements, followed by the retreat of the Prussians into Mainz, and the only object left for England now was to keep the French out of Holland. For this purpose Pitt despatched an expedition to Ostend, under Lord Moira, to assist the Royal Duke; but by the time he arrived at his port of debarkation, Bruges and Ypres had already fallen into the hands of the French, and York was in full retreat along the Scheldt. The Austrians had also been defeated by Pichegru. Another attempt was made on

September. September 15th, York ordering General Abercromby to retake the village of Boxtel, but the British force was insufficient, and they were forced to retreat across the Waal in October

Even the elements now seemed leagued against the allies, for the river and canals froze hard, affording a safe crossing to Pichegru, who pursued the British in their retreat towards the Hanoverian frontier, and along the Ems, until they finally embarked at Bremen, and returned home. In this campaign we are introduced to another great soldier, Arthur Wellesley, who was in command of the 33rd regiment, but he had here no opportunity to distinguish himself, and afterwards stated that on this occasion he merely learnt "how not to do it."[1] 1794. September.

The profit and loss after two years of war was therefore as follows: France had gained Belgium, Nice, and Savoy, and was in occupation of Holland and the whole of Germany west of the Rhine; England had captured many of the French West Indian Islands; the other allies had gained nothing, and were still wrangling over Poland. Mutual distrust and suspicion paralysed all, the Emperor being indeed so affected that he refused to take part in reducing the Poles, because he thought the Courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin intended to divide Poland between them when peace was restored.[2] It is therefore doubtful whether the principles of the Monarchical Courts or the French Republicans were the less to be admired, but it is certain that the latter were more plausible in their professions, for they found a ready convert in Holland, where a strong republican party sympathised with the new doctrines, and took advantage of the opportunity to abolish the rule of its Stadtholder, and to join its conqueror as an ally. This did not at all agree with the programme of Catherine of Russia, and the reports that peace had been re-established between France and some of the belligerent powers were received at St. Petersburg with much displeasure. No longer occupied in war with France, Prussia might prove an unpleasant rival in Poland, and the King was therefore subjected to some feminine taunts regarding his loss of honour.

[1] "Life of Wellington," by Sir Herbert Maxwell.

[2] From Whitworth, October 7, 1794: "From what I hear the Austrian Ambassador is ordered to declare that the Emperor will take no active part in reducing the Poles, until he is convinced that it is not the intention of the Courts of Petersburg and Berlin to pursue their system of partition when tranquillity is re-established in the country." F. O. Records, Russia, 28.

1794. It is a pitiable story. Lying, intriguing statesmen vying with each other to demolish their weaker neighbours; Generals selling themselves and their honour; armies badly led and stupidly handled; mobs howling liberty and practising anarchy.

CHAPTER II

Professions of Frederick William of Prussia—Treaty of Basle—Jealousy of German Powers—Spain retires from the war—New Constitution in France—Expedition to Quiberon Bay—Naval Actions and Colonial Expeditions—Acquisitions in the East Indies—French advance on Vienna—Thugut and the Austrian Court—Campaign of 1796—The Malmesbury Peace Mission—Reasons for doubting its genuineness—Distrust of De la Croix—Negotiations broken off—Statements in Parliament—Ireland and the secret Irish Societies—Leaders of the United Irish—Their intrigues with the French Government—Political informers.

THE attitude of Prussia was now decidedly in favour of peace, even if the Republic insisted upon extending its territory to the banks of the Rhine. King Frederick William also distinctly denied the existence of a new treaty for the partition of Poland,[1] but he had in May 1794 journeyed to Poland to quell the rising under Kosciusko, who, as head of the rebels, had obtained possession of Warsaw and Wilna. But while all the preparations continued for a peace with France, Prussia still endeavoured to maintain a bold face before the allies, and with this object drew up a scheme for forming a combined army of ambitious dimensions.[2] The Prussian Court indeed assured the English that the proposed treaty contained nothing in it contrary to the alliance with Great Britain,[3] and that nothing but the direst necessity caused them to agree to the terms demanded by France.[4]

[1] Lord Spencer to Lord Grenville, January 13, 1795. F. O. Records, Prussia, 37.

[2] Lord Spencer to Lord Grenville, February 10, 1795: "After a council it was arranged to send an army of 114,000 men, consisting of 18,000 English and Hanoverians from Osnabruck, to the sea, forming the right wing; the left wing of 12,000 Prussians, 18,000 Saxons, and 12,000 Hessians from Lipstadt to Hanan and the centre; of 48,000 to Lipstadt. Prussia is indifferent to the fate of Mayence, and there is an increasing coolness between Courts of Berlin and Vienna." F. O. Records, Prussia, 37.

[3] "Minute of Conference," May 14, 1795. F. O. Records, Prussia, 37.

[4] Lord Spencer to Grenville, March 21, 1795: "Mons. Hardenberg, who still continues to entertain hopes of relief from England, has lengthened out his journey in such a manner as not to arrive at Basle before the 19th of this month. He will continue to observe a similar conduct during the first days

1795. April. The position of the Prussian Court was indeed extremely difficult. It wished, as a kingdom, to be at peace with France, at the same time that it was nominally at war as a member of the German Empire, and thus as an ally of England. Eventually the Treaty of Basle was signed on April 5th, which stipulated for the complete neutrality of Prussia and certain German States, north of a fixed line, but all the Princes and States were allowed to join it if they wished, except Austria. A secret article stipulated that if the Empire should cede to France the territories west of the Rhine Prussia should cede hers also, but should receive compensation elsewhere. But this treaty was far more momentous than the mere conclusion of peace with France, for it was the first formal step taken toward the dissolution of the system of the German Empire, now merely a complicated and feebly united assemblage of Princes and States under the protection of the Emperor. It was governed by a series of ancient and modern laws and customs which can conveniently be classified into—

(1) The Imperial capitulations, or a code of laws framed by the different diets, and accepted by the Emperor.

(2) The Golden Bull whose author was the Emperor Charles IV., in 1356, by which the number of Electors was settled at seven, their rights and prerogatives being clearly defined. The princes were not allowed to attack each other as in former times, but were obliged to seek redress in the Imperial Court.

(3) The stipulations of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, and

(4) The usages where no written law existed.[1]

At the end of the eighteenth century the central government was paralysed, and the local authorities, who were either Electors, Dukes, Princes, Counts, or, lowest of all, Imperial Knights, exerted autocratic power over small territories, which

of the conference, but if at the end of that time he perceives that no offers will be made to the Prussian Ministers, he will be obliged by his duty, and by a sense of the distressed condition of this country, to think of nothing but making the best terms he can with the French." F. O. Records, Prussia, 37.

[1] This excellent classification is taken from an unsigned MS. in the F. O. Records, Austria, 98. See also "The Life and Times of Stein," by J. R. Seeley, M.A.

were consequently so very badly governed that the peasants 1795.
frequently complained of the landholders to the Imperial Courts, and sometimes even rebelled against them. All these sovereign rulers, above the level of the Imperial Knights, were represented in the Reichstag, the legislature, which sat at Regensburg, and all either voted individually or had a share in a collective vote. The Law Courts sat at Wetzlar and Vienna, and administered justice fairly well, but the Empire was by no means a happy family, for Frederick of Prussia was always the rival and enemy of the Imperial House, and not until he died in 1786 did the Emperor Joseph become the most powerful person in Europe. Nevertheless, the great energy and strength of Frederick had raised a powerful army, inspired by his own true soldierly instincts, and he had lavishly spent the revenues from the Crown domains upon the military equipment of the kingdom. By the treaty of Basle the King of Prussia clearly showed that he considered he could bargain away German territory without consulting the Emperor, but it was not until later, 1806, that the actual Empire was broken up. In spite of this evidence of a feeling of independence the King was nervous and uncertain in his actions, and was still very jealous of the friendship between the Emperors and England, which caused Lord Spencer to fear that he might fall into the arms of France, in spite of his profuse protestations of friendship.[1] In order, indeed, to propitiate England, his Ministry did not hesitate to state that they were anxious to restore the June.
Stadtholder of Holland, although at the very time they had signed a treaty with the Dutch guaranteeing the abolition of that office.[2]

In the meantime Spain had also grown tired of the war, and feared for her safety; but before treating with France

[1] From Lord Spencer: "King jealous of our connection with the two Imperial Courts, and the coolness existing here with Vienna might lead him to turn his thoughts to an alliance with France, a measure to which his personal feelings would be highly repugnant." F. O. Records, Prussia, 37.

[2] To Lord Spencer, June 9, 1795, Downing Street: "With respect to reintegration of the Stadtholder, your Lordship will have seen that the treaty, signed by Rewbel and Sieyes at the Hague, expressly guarantees the abolition of the Stadtholderate, and affords a convincing proof of the little reliance which can be placed on the language of the Prussian Ministers." F. O. Records, Prussia, 37.

1795. June. was anxious to discover the exact intentions of England. The Duc de la Alcudia therefore sought an interview with the Earl of Bute, Ambassador for England, and stated that he feared the King of Spain would lose "Navarre, Pampeluna, and all the provinces of Biscay." He also thought that the war had been ill-conducted, and that the different Powers had neglected the main object, and had turned their views solely to conquest. Nevertheless, if they succeeded in restoring a Prince of Bourbon to the throne of France, he was willing, out of gratitude, to cede to the allies whatever was demanded. "England suspects the views of Spain as to the English possessions, Spain suspects the views of England; somehow or other England had always got the better of Spain, witness Honduras, Nootka, and lately St. Domingo," he continued, to which Bute answered that to conciliate matters, and to find out causes of jealousies, was the main object of his mission.[1]

July. Spain then pursued exactly the same tactics as Prussia had done, and, while stating that the King would never treat with France until driven to extremity, prepared a treaty which was signed on July 22nd, the Spanish half of St. Domingo being ceded to the Republic in return for peace. When this news reached Downing Street Grenville at once wrote that the session of the Spanish part of St. Domingo was a violation of the treaty of Utrecht, which had been renewed by the last treaty between Spain and England, and which especially stipulated that Spain should not cede to France any part of her American possessions. He further instructed Bute to endeavour to discover if any secret terms with the French were in course of negotiation. Spain then prepared for war with England, and Bute was instructed to state that although the violation of the treaty of Utrecht was a sufficient cause for war, the King desired peace. If Spain intended to remove her troops from St. Domingo altogether England would perhaps overlook this violation, but if it were intended to garrison a French possession with Spanish troops, such conduct would inevitably lead to war.[2] The Spanish Govern-

[1] Bute to Grenville, July 11, 1795. F. O. Records, Spain, 38.

[2] To the Earl of Bute, Downing Street, October 11, 1795. F. O. Records, Spain, 39.

ment then retaliated that if England attacked St. Domingo war would be inevitable, but Bute was instructed to deny that the British Government had any design whatever against the Spanish possessions. In this condition of mutual distrust the two kingdoms existed at peace for another year, during which Spain was gradually drawn towards the Republic, and finally concluded an alliance with it in August 1796. 1795. July.

The Reign of Terror in the Republic had ended with the life of Robespierre in July 1794, and the Convention a year later, after discussing the advisability of altering their political system, drew up a new Constitution. The evils attendant upon the single chamber caused them to split it into two, a Chamber of five hundred and a Council of two hundred and fifty Ancients now forming the legislature, while the Directory, consisting of five members, chosen by the Assembly but not responsible to it, formed the executive.

Two-thirds of the members of the new Assemblies were to be appointed from the Convention, but before the new Constitution could be put into force the mob demon again raised his head in Paris, and it was necessary to call in General Bonaparte to suppress the rioters. The five Directors were all Conventionalists, who had voted for the death of the King, but Carnot was the only one who had been a member of the Committee of Public Safety.

Austria and England, now left to continue the war alone, at once formed a scheme to attract the French forces to the eastern frontiers in order to prevent invasion by the Austrians under Clerfayt who was instructed to advance from the Rhine while England landed a body of Royalists on the western shores. Clerfayt disobeyed, and the flower of the old French nobility, which had been disembarked at Quiberon Bay on June 27, 1795, were literally driven into the sea by General Hoche. Then followed, against the General's wishes, but by express order of the Convention, the summary execution of seven hundred of the emigrants who had been captured, this heartless butchery being carried out under one of the most sanguinary decrees of the Reign of Terror which enacted that every armed emigrant should be put to death

795. June and August.

without trial![1] But if the land forces of the allies were still unsuccessful the British fleets were easily beating the French on every occasion. On June 23rd Lord Bridport discovered thirteen French ships of the line, under all sail, in a line of battle abreast running before the wind for L'Orient. The English fleet, consisting of sixteen ships, at once joined in a general chase, the *Orion* and the *Irresistible* being ahead in a position to begin the fight, while the *Queen Charlotte* soon ran into action between the *Alexander* and *Formidable* and totally disabled both in ten minutes, when she devoted her attention to the *Tigre*, which also soon struck her colours. Lord Bridport was in the *Royal George*, but after assisting in taking the *Tigre*, as the enemy drew near the shore, and the pilots were afraid of venturing too near the shoals, the Admiral called away all the other ships engaged and stopped the action. But for this position of the enemy's ships it is probable that the whole fleet would have been taken.[2]

In the Mediterranean also, where Admiral Hotham had succeeded Admiral Hood, the fleet was successful in several small engagements, the French trade with Genoa being stopped by a blockade, and their whole carrying trade being constantly harassed. Nor did England cease in her designs on the colonial possessions of her enemies, for in August a British squadron, under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir George Elphinstone, with a detachment of the 78th Regiment under Major General Craig, anchored in Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope. The Dutch Governor, General Sluysken, refused to surrender, whereupon about eight hundred men were landed on the 4th of the month and took possession of Simon's Town, the Dutch retiring to the adjacent heights, where they chose a strong position for defence, with a mountain on the right and the sea on the left. From this they were dislodged on the 7th after a sharp engagement, but on the next day, having augmented their forces, they returned to the attack with renewed vigour, supported by eight field guns, the seamen under Captain Hardy being for

[1] Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, vol. vii. p. 273.

[2] James' "Naval History," vol. i. p. 248. "Memoirs of Life of Admiral Codrington," by Lady Bourchier, vol. i. p. 37.

a time very hard pressed, but they remained so steady that the Dutch were ultimately compelled to retire. 1795. June and August.

On September 4th the long expected English fleet of fourteen sail of East India ships with reinforcements, commanded by General Alured Clarke, appeared, and it was decided to attack Cape Town at once. After the disembarkation of troops and stores was complete the army began its march, the *America*, two sloops, and the *Bombay Castle*, Indiaman, proceeding round to Table Bay to make a diversion on that side. General Sluysken now recognising that it was useless to resist capitulated on the 15th, surrendering the town and the colony with 1000 regular troops and two large ships of the Dutch East India Company.

In 1796 a Colonial Expedition was sent to South America, where the Dutch settlements of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice in Dutch Guiana peacefully surrendered at the end of April to Captain John Parr of the *Malabar*. In the same month the island of St. Lucie, which had been recaptured by the French in the previous year, was again taken by Rear Admiral Christian, and two months later the islands of St. Vincent and Grenada were subdued after a slight resistance. 1796. August.

On the other side of the globe the important fortress of Colombo in the island of Ceylon was approached both by land and sea, and after some fighting the garrison surrendered on February 15th, transferring the settlement and its dependencies to Great Britain, who had but a trifling loss to record as the price of this most valuable possession. Shortly afterwards the Banda or Nutmeg Islands and the capital of the Dutch Molucca Islands were added to the British Empire. During this summer the Dutch sent a small squadron consisting of nine ships to the Cape of Good Hope, with the idea of recapturing the place, not knowing the true strength of the garrison. On their arrival they anchored in Saldanha Bay. The British ships at this time were in Simon's Bay weatherbound, but at length were enabled to put to sea and arrived off Saldanha Bay on August 17th, where the Dutch were still lying at anchor. The latter, perceiving the immense superiority of the British fleet, immediately capitulated to Admiral Sir George Elphinstone.

The French, now freed from anxiety on account of Prussia

1796. August. and Holland and being at peace with Spain, were enabled to throw their whole strength on the Continent against Austria. Acting on the advice of Bonaparte a movement was undertaken against Vienna by three armies, one under Jourdan, who was ordered to enter Germany by Frankfort with the army of the Netherlands; another under Moreau, who was to cross the Rhine at Strasburg, and a third commanded by Bonaparte, who faced the forces of Austria and Sardinia forty miles to the west of Genoa. Early in the year the Court of Vienna had ratified the partition of Poland treaty, and orders had been sent to the Prussian Commander at Cracow to evacuate that place and the whole of the territory guaranteed to the Emperor. Catherine of Russia, being now again on terms of friendship with the Emperor, directed her Ambassador at Vienna to urge him to a vigorous prosecution of the war, but gave no indication that she intended to send effective support.[1] The Emperor himself was anxious to continue his conquests on the Upper Rhine and to invade France from that quarter, but was obliged by pressure of pecuniary distress to confine the war to Italy. Thugut, his Minister, was of opinion that the allies should seize the first opportunity of concluding a favourable peace, and stated to Sir Morton Eden that the Emperor would never object to England obtaining compensation out of Europe, but suggested that this proposition should be kept from Prussia.[2] Austria indeed was very anxious to obtain a loan from England in February, but Pitt was obliged to refuse although he was willing to guarantee the expenses of the King of Prussia if he would assemble a force on the frontiers of Holland and succeed in re-establishing the Dutch Government. In such a case the expenses would ultimately be defrayed by the restored Government, or from such of the Dutch possessions abroad as should remain in the hands of England.[3]

1796. March.

Since Austria was anxious to make peace if possible, Pitt made overtures to France, in March, through the medium of Mr. Wickham, the English Ambassador in Switzerland, who

[1] Eden to Grenville, Vienna, January 2, 1796. F. O. Records, Austria, 44.

[2] Ibid., January 22, 1796. F. O. Records, Austria, 44.

[3] To Sir Morton Eden, February 9, 1796. F. O. Records, Austria, 44.

applied to Mons. Barthèlemy, the French Ambassador at Basle. The suggestion was thrown out that France should restore the Belgic provinces, on which condition alone England was prepared to make peace; but the French Government sent a very cold and guarded reply, in which it was apparent that the Directory would on no account agree to such a proposition, and the negotiation was therefore broken off. At the same time Grenville instructed Eden that the Government strongly approved of any well-concerted plan of offensive operations on the side of Italy, and were prepared to allow the Mediterranean fleet to co-operate in the execution of it as far as practicable.[1] 1796. March.

The campaign of 1796 commenced in April, between Bonaparte's army of 40,000 men and Beaulieu's of 38,000 Austrians, and a smaller Sardinian army situated in the Piedmontese Apennines. Bonaparte, after four days' fighting at Montenotte and Millesimo, forced his army between the allies and, holding back the Austrians, drove the Piedmontese to within thirty miles of Turin. After such a defeat the Government eagerly accepted an armistice, and handed over to the French the fortresses which command the entrances of Italy, and a treaty of peace between France and Sardinia soon followed which ceded Savoy to the Republic.

Bonaparte then followed Beaulieu, and, crossing the Po, threatened his communications, thus forcing him to abandon Milan and fall back upon the line of the Adda, where he was defeated at the bridge of Lodi on May 10th, and a few days later Bonaparte made his triumphal entry into Milan amid the enthusiasm of the people, who imagined a new era was about to commence. This happy delusion was soon dissipated, for the French, acting on the advice of the Directory, at once began to pillage works of art and other movable valuables, and demanded twenty million francs in return for granting liberty to the Milanese. These successes merely whetted the appetite of the young French General for more glory, and advancing against the already crippled Austrian army he defeated them again on the Mincio on May 29th, Beaulieu being then compelled to retreat out of Italy 1796. April.

[1] To Sir Morton Eden, March 8th.

1796. April. into the Tyrol. Bonaparte now followed up these further victories by expelling the Papal Legate from Bologna, by concluding an armistice with Ferdinand of Naples, and by demanding twenty million francs and many valuable manuscripts, busts, and pictures from the Pope. He next turned his attention to Tuscany, which had made peace with the Republic in the previous year, but his rapacity was attracted by the English ships and cargoes in Leghorn, and so he established himself there. Here he found the end of his tether, for Sir John Jervis was in command of the British fleet in the Mediterranean, and steadily blockaded the Port after stopping all the coasting trade of the French. The unfortunate people in Leghorn were now between the devil and the deep sea, and soon becoming seriously short of provisions threatened to rise against the French if they did not leave the place before August 15th.[1] Meanwhile the English fleet in the Mediterranean was making many captures, and on July 10th seized the harbour of Porto Ferrajo in Elba, and took possession of the island.

1796. August. Mantua was now invested by the French and thither Bonaparte returned and met the Austrian relieving army, double his own strength, which had descended from the Tyrol in three corps, but by the extraordinary promptitude of his movements their junction was prevented and the armies defeated at Lonato and Castiglione. The Austrians were therefore compelled to retreat into the Tyrol, leaving 15,000 prisoners in the hands of the enemy. The success was not, however, all on one side—Moreau and Jourdan both failed in their undertakings, the latter being defeated by the Archduke Charles at Amberg, and driven back in confusion, while the former could then only save his own army by retreating, so that in the autumn of 1796 the French were compelled to recross the Rhine. In spite of these successes Prussia now definitely agreed to the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, but when the Directory approached Austria she refused to enter into any negotiations not conducted in common with England. Thugut indeed, cheered by the success of the Archduke and by a promise of help from the Empress Catherine, now cherished the hope of forcing the

[1] "Nelson's Letters and Despatches," Laughton.

Republic to abandon all her conquests and of ultimately acquiring Bavaria for Austria. In August Spain concluded an offensive alliance with France, and laid an embargo on all the British vessels in her ports. This decided the Government to keep the fleet in the Mediterranean and to retaliate, although war was not actually declared.[1] 1796. August.

Pitt was now preparing to send Lord Malmesbury on a mission to Paris, presumably with the idea of treating for peace, but as historians have given various opinions as to the genuineness of this overture on the part of England, it is necessary to consider carefully first the probabilities and secondly the actual evidence, not as given in the published documents, but in the original letters in the Record Office.

The third Lord Malmesbury, the biographer of his grandfather, collected most of the correspondence relating to this period, but not all, and since he published his work, "The Diaries and Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury" in 1844, he probably had not access to the original documents.[2] We will therefore point out the omissions in this work, which has always been regarded as the authority to consult for this negotiation. Although not numerous they are very important, and the original documents throw a great deal of light on what has hitherto been inexplicable.

In the first place George III. did not, as was his wont concerning peace proposals, oppose the Cabinet, but thought they would not be successful in arriving at terms, and it is a curious fact that when the King stated that a measure would not pass, or a negotiation be successful, his prophecy was usually fulfilled. Again Pitt, in common with Thugut, thought the French nation must soon be too exhausted to continue the war, and either did not read or did not heed the excellent reports of the true strength of the country sent to England by a secret agent in Switzerland.[3] It is true the

[1] Grenville to Eden, October 20, 1796. F. O. Records, Austria, 47.

[2] In England historians are not allowed to see the Foreign Office Records for a more recent date than seventy years before the time when they are writing.

[3] This information was sent through Lord Elgin at Brussels to Lord Grenville. It has been copied up to January 25, 1794, edited and published by Mr. Oscar Browning at the end of the "Despatches of Lord Gower," and was evidently the most reliable information obtained by the Government, although apparently they laid more stress on the exaggerated reports of the Royalists.

1796. August. war was not so popular in the country since trade was lost with France, Spain, and Holland, but still the enormous supplies needed benefited the trading people at the expense of the national debt. Again the victory of the Archduke Charles had raised great expectations, and Pitt, who at the beginning of the year had refused help to Austria, had since sent her £1,200,000, showing that he had great hopes she would ultimately be successful.

Another strong argument in favour of the view, that the Ministers did not expect to be able to conclude a satisfactory peace at this time, is the fact that the overtures in March had broken down because the Directory would on no account alienate the Belgian provinces, the only condition on which England was prepared to cease hostilities, and thus Pitt must have had but faint hopes that the negotiations would be successful. It is also doubtful if either the Parliament or the country wished for peace—except on their own terms—for in May Fox had attacked the Government in a speech lasting nearly four hours, in which the whole conduct of the war was reviewed and condemned, but Pitt with equal ability defended it and, on a division which was practically a vote of censure, the Government majority was 216 to 42.[1] Not only a majority of votes but most of the talent also was in favour of continuing the contest, and the result of the General Election in this month showed the country supported the Government. There had been a good harvest, the price of wheat had fallen and the country was, with the exception of a few noisy meetings, quiet and contented.

It must be remembered also that England had repeatedly proved her superiority at sea, and had prepared for invasion which, in any case, would have been very difficult to carry out while the fleet existed. She had also gained considerably in the war and lost nothing. Pondicherry in the East Indies, Tobago, Martinique, and San Lucia in the West Indies, had been taken from the French, and when Holland fell into their hands England had seized all her colonies, Ceylon, the Malacca Isles, the Dutch establishments on the Malabar Coast, the Cape of Good Hope, Demerara, Essequibo, and the Moluccas. It was therefore very unlikely that England

[1] "Parliamentary History."

would consent to purchase peace by the surrender of all her own conquests to France; and indeed, as we shall show, such an offer was only made when the acceptance of it was known to be impossible. 1796. October.

The Whig Opposition were sceptical as to the intentions of the Government to conclude peace, and imagined that the negotiations were merely a feint in order to convince the country that they were obliged to carry on the war, whether they wished or not; but Burke, who apparently believed in the sincerity of the overtures, denounced the mission as a new humiliation. We have said enough to show that it was extremely unlikely that the King and Cabinet had any intention to humiliate the nation, or to give up their conquests without adequate recompense, and now we will give the direct evidence as discovered in the original correspondence with Lord Malmesbury.[1]

Malmesbury's instructions were to insist, first, that no negotiations could be entered into except in conjunction with Austria, and, if the French agreed to this, to ask for an envoy from Vienna, and afterwards to work in harmony with him and also with Ministers from Naples, Lisbon, and the two Sicilies. It was not his Majesty's intention to make peace with France and Holland at the same time, but separately; and Spain, who was expected to declare war immediately, was not to be allowed to interfere in any dispute while she remained at peace. But a most important point in the instructions was undoubtedly Article XI., which directed him to keep his eyes open to discover the actual state of France and the designs of the Spanish Ambassador, and in order to do this effectually the King granted a certain sum of money for the purposes of secret service.[2]

Malmesbury, with these instructions, started on his journey on October 23rd, and wrote from Paris that the country was looking prosperous, but that the ploughs were driven by women and boys, there being but few men about, "so it is evident the male population is diminished—very

[1] "The Malmesbury Mission," 1796. F. O. Records, France, 46. It will be seen that to carry out this programme would entail a considerable time.

[2] Downing Street, October 14, 1796: "In order to obey the eleventh Article his Majesty gives you the power of employing a certain sum of money for secret service purposes." This is not in the "Diaries."

1796. October

few troops about." He soon had an interview with Mons. de la Croix, Minister for Foreign Affairs, who stated that France had her allies. "I at once replied, so had England, towards whom we intended to fulfil our engagements."[1]

The next letter is in cipher, unsigned and undated: "It is impossible not to suppose that the hesitation about not allowing my messenger to sail from Calais arises from the intention of this country to try the experiment of an expedition on our coasts. They have fifty flat-bottomed boats at Dunkirk, and several gunboats of a new construction are lying in the harbour of Boulogne."

Mons. de la Croix was now authorised to act as Plenipotentiary, and at once complained that the memorial which Malmesbury had presented was not distinct or specific in its proposals.[2] "I said that his Majesty intended to employ the effects of his successes during the war in compensating France for the restitution of such of her conquests on the Continent as may be necessary to satisfy the just claims of his Majesty's allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe."[3] De la Croix next asked if the Court of Vienna concurred, and said, "How are we to expect a general peace when we hear that the Emperor is determined to carry on the war." He then thought it would be easier to make a separate peace with England, but dropped the point when Malmesbury replied that it was impossible.

1796. November.

The despatch continues: "After making inquiries and examining the positions of the armies, I have directed Dressins (the messenger) not to cross the Rhine until he reaches Basle. If he was to pass it at Strasbourg he would find all the (bridges?) occupied by Austrian or French soldiers."[4] On the same date Malmesbury writes that many persons in France look forward with great confidence to an early and very considerable revolution in the Government of France, and that there is a reaction in favour of the late Sovereign. From time to time further instructions were

[1] October 23, 1796. "Malmesbury Diaries," vol. iii. p. 271.

[2] In the memorial no designation is made of the conquests to be returned by England, or of the restitutions to be demanded from France. See "Diaries," &c., vol. iii. p. 261.

[3] October 27, 1796. "Diaries," p. 279.

[4] October 27, 1796. Ibid. Not in the "Diaries."

sent to the envoy from Downing Street, and a letter dated November 7th contains the following passage which is pregnant with meaning. "If the negotiation fails, it must be rendered evident to the world that it fails from the hostile determination of those who govern France, and from their resolution to admit of no terms of peace which are consistent with the safety, interests, and honour of the other Powers of Europe."[1] The French Government had published the various stages of the negotiations up to this date, which greatly annoyed Malmesbury, who did not approve of democratic diplomacy. Lord Grenville was also anxious to know how far they intended to publish the various stages, and thought that the publication was a great mistake and rendered more difficult a final settlement.[2] 1796. November.

The negotiations dragged on through November, during which month the English Plenipotentiary sent home valuable information concerning an expedition of eleven ships of the line, and from fifteen to twenty thousand men, which was destined to sail from Brest against Ireland, the descent on England being given up.[3]

The Ministers at home do not appear to have hurried at all in formulating definite peace proposals, and De la Croix became more and more anxious and impatient, until the Directory peremptorily asked Malmesbury on November 26th to designate the objects of compensation which he proposed.[4] Malmesbury then replied that England's demands were the restitution to the Emperor and King of all their possessions before the war, the re-establishment of peace between the German Empire and France by an arrangement ensuring the interests and peace of Europe to be afterwards settled, the evacuation of Italy, and an engagement not to interfere in the internal affairs of that country, in return for which England would restore to France all that she had taken in the two Indies, but if she waived the right, by the treaty of

[1] November 7, 1796. "Malmesbury Diaries," vol. iii. p. 301.

[2] Ibid.

[3] November 13, 1796. Ibid. "Diaries," p. 319.

[4] "Le soussigné est chargé par le Directoire executif de vous inviter à dessigner dans le plus court delai et nominativement les objets de compensation réciproques que vous proposez."—Ch. de la Croix. Paris le 7ième Frimaire, An. 5. "Diaries," p. 336.

1796. November. Utrecht, of opposing the concession of St. Domingo to France she would require compensation.[1]

Towards the end of November, Malmesbury stated that the French Government had begun to suspect that the real object of his mission was to make observations on their internal affairs, and if possible to foment trouble, so he had to be very careful lest his means of informing himself as to the state of parties, the strength of Government, &c., should be much circumscribed.[2] Nevertheless, he continued to send home valuable information respecting the French and Spanish fleets, and reported that the King of Spain had agreed to allow 20,000 French to join his army.[3] On December 11th, he is authorised to say that England would entertain other arrangements for the Netherlands if the Emperor were compensated, but De la Croix answered that "it appeared to him to be liable to insurmountable objections, that it seemed to require much more than it conceded, and in the event not to leave France in a situation of proportionate greatness to the other Powers of Europe." He then stated that "the Austrian Netherlands were annexed and could not be disposed of without flinging the nation into all the confusion which must follow a convocation of the primary Assemblies," but offered compensation for the Netherlands to the Emperor, "in the secularisations of the three Ecclesiastical Electorates and several Bishoprics in Germany and in Italy."[4] To this Malmesbury replied, that his Majesty would never consent to the Netherlands remaining part of France, and De la Croix replied, that the negotiations could not then be a success."[5]

1796. December.

[1] On the same date, November 28th, Malmesbury writes: "From the change in De la Croix's manner and language there is a reasonable probability of very admissible terms being ultimately obtained, and I am sure if we do not, after what has passed, think it expedient to state conditions and lay before them the project of a Treaty, the whole of this country now so languid and so divided in opinion will unite, and be induced to pursue the war with redoubled, though perhaps not very dangerous effects, considering the greatness of the Power with which it would have to contend." F. O. Records, France, 46. Not in the "Diaries."

[2] November 28th, Ibid. "Diaries," p. 325.

[3] December 3rd, Ibid. Not in the "Diaries."

[4] December 20th, Ibid. "Diaries," p. 354.

[5] From Malmesbury, December 20th: "I shall so soon have it in my power to say the little which remains to say relating to this sudden though perhaps not unlooked for close to my mission, that I need not trespass further on your Lordship's patience."—F. O. Records, France, 46. "Diaries," p. 362.

Thus concluded the first overtures for peace, the result being that the English Ministry was more firmly persuaded than ever that the French would either soon be exhausted or rise up in revolution against the Republic, and the French Government distrusted the sincerity of the wish of the British for peace. 1796. December.

Needless to say the published documents breathe quite another spirit. In the papers ordered to be laid before Parliament are many extracts and letters from Lord Malmesbury in which the odium for the delay is placed entirely upon the French Minister. In the declaration dated Whitehall, Dec. 27, 1796, the French Government are accused of endeavouring to defeat the mission in its outset: "The indecent and injurious language employed with a view to irritate, the captious and frivolous objections raised for the purpose of obstructing the progress of the discussion; all these have sufficiently appeared from the official papers which passed on both sides and which are known to all Europe."[1]

On Dec. 30th, Pitt addressed the House of Commons stating his regret and disappointment at the result of the negotiations, and that it was due to "the ambition and obstinacy and the arrogant pretensions of the enemy." He proceeded to point out that they only wished for a secure and permanent peace, and then challenged any gentleman in the House "who as friends to peace, as friends to their country who, consistent with the principles of statesmen or the feelings of patriots, can discover any alternative in the ultimate line of conduct to be pursued." Fox followed and lamented the failure of the negotiations, stating that, from the papers on the table, it did not appear that he, Malmesbury, could reasonably hope for a successful issue to his negotiations. He then continued, with more truth than he himself probably suspected: "It seems doubtful indeed, from the inspection of these papers, whether Lord Malmesbury was not sent over merely to show his diplomatic dexterity. However the right hon. gentleman may contrive to persuade the majority of this House that his inclinations bend towards peace, I have no doubt but the papers in the interest of Ministers will hold forth to the public that the vigorous prosecution of

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1438.

1796. December. the war is the only measure which the country has left for its security." He concluded his speech by stating that it was not at all unreasonable of the enemy to break off the negotiations, for they had merely taken advantage of the situation in which their great success had placed them. Lord Grenville in the House of Lords also lamented that the negotiations had been broken off, and stated that it had furnished the most decisive proof "that at no period had any real wish for peace been entertained on the part of the French Directory."[1]

Historians have differed considerably in opinion as to the genuineness of the overtures of peace made by England in 1796, but any one who has read the original documents can have but little doubt that the chief object of the mission was to gain information, although the Government no doubt would have been willing to conclude peace if France had consented to give up the Netherlands. Thiers deliberately calls the negotiations "illusoire,"[2] but gives no evidence in support of his contention. The third Lord Malmesbury, the biographer of his grandfather, was astonished at this opinion of Thiers, but that it was also held by the Directory at the time admits of no doubt.[3] Mr. Lecky throws the whole blame for the failure of the negotiations on the French Government,[4] and undoubtedly the French Directory were as determined as the English Government either to insist upon their own terms or to continue the war. The action of the Directory indeed in continuing the preparations at Brest for an invasion of Ireland while the negotiations were still proceeding showed that they also had no intention of attempting to arrive at a compromise, and the orders to Hoche must have been given before the mission terminated.[5] Mr. Fyffe thinks the negotia-

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1494.

[2] Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Française*, tome viii. p. 357. "Cette négociation etait évidenment illusoire; le Directoire ne pouvait rien en attendre, et il résolut de déjourer, les finesses de l'Angleterre, en envoyent directment un négociateur à Vienne."

[3] "Diaries and Correspondence of Lord Malmesbury," vol. iii. See preface *et seq.*

[4] "History of England in the Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 23.

[5] On November 25th Wolfe Tone writes, "Colonel Shee tells me to-day that he has it from Bruix, one of our Admirals, that we shall sail in six days." —"Wolfe Tone's Diary," vol. ii. p. 107.

tion was not a mere feint on Pitt's part but that he failed to recognise the enormous strength and resource of the French.[1] On the whole we must conclude that both nations considered themselves in a position to dictate their own terms, and that the English Ministers were very anxious to obtain intelligence of which they were at that time greatly in need. 1796. December.

During these years the English rule in Corsica had not been a success, for the Viceroy of George III., Sir Gilbert Elliot, was not at all friendly with General Paoli, and the new Constitution was not suited to the wants and wishes of the people, who showed their discontent by revolting and openly threatening that they would support the French if they were invaded from Leghorn. The Government therefore decided to evacuate the place, and Nelson and his squadron safely embarked the 3000 British troops, after their occupation of two years, the last English soldier leaving Bastia as the French entered it.

The centre of interest was now soon to be turned to that part of the United Kingdom in which the inhabitants have had to struggle with a poor soil, and have neither possessed minerals nor facilities for manufacture or commerce on a large scale, and, consequently, have never been prosperous. Undoubtedly there were many causes of grievance at this date which weighed upon the Irish more than the English, and, undoubtedly, the Statesmen of the day would have directed more of their time and energies to internal measures if they had not been engaged in the war.

The agitation for a reform of the franchise was proceeding throughout the kingdom, but the Catholic disabilities and the tithes were grievances particularly heavily felt in a country chiefly inhabited by Roman Catholics. An essential difference between the English and Irish characters is that whereas the former prefer generally to state their grievances with as much publicity as possible and eventually resort to rioting if their requests are long delayed, the latter invariably begin by forming secret societies, and binding themselves with terrible oaths. The next act in the drama occurs when one or more of the members—very often the actual leaders themselves—give information to the Government, and finally the whole

[1] "History of Modern Europe," vol. i. p. 131.

1796. plot is nipped in the bud. The most important of these bodies at this date was the United Irish Society which had branches all over Ireland, and was actively engaged in propagating democratic and revolutionary doctrines largely derived from Paine's "Rights of Man." The great majority of the leaders were either Presbyterians or Members of the Established Church, Protestant Ulster at this date being the centre of Irish republicanism. Many of the United Irishmen are interesting personalities, as illustrating what various motives will cause individuals of entirely different temperaments to work for the same ends. Theobald Wolfe Tone was born in 1764, and educated for the Bar, but soon left it for politics and, being dissatisfied with the slow constitutional methods of Grattan and the Whigs, was chiefly instrumental in founding the United Irish Society in 1791.[1] He was a strange compound of dreamy unpractical idealism and sound common sense.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald, son of the Duke of Leinster, was an unintelligent but courageous and disinterested young soldier who was early impressed with the theoretical doctrines of Paine, and afterwards became convinced that Ireland would be better governed as an independent republic.[2] Arthur O'Connor was also a man of wealth and social position who apparently was persuaded by reading a work on Irish History[3] that it was the object of the English to keep Ireland in a subdued and poverty-stricken condition for fear that if the country became rich it would either fall into the hands of a foreign power or form a republic of its own. Thomas Addis Emmet was an entirely different stamp of man, being a good lawyer and writer, with an honest unselfish desire to obtain a radical reform of Parliament and Catholic emancipation which he thought would never be granted unless force were used.[4] Oliver Bond was a rich woollen draper and son of a Dissenting minister in Donegal. He was one of the earliest to plan measures of reform, and for uniting the religious sects, and

[1] "Memoirs and Diaries of Wolfe Tone," by his Son. Madden's "United Irishmen." "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," by Moore.

[2] "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," by Moore.

[3] Leland's "History of Ireland." See Lecky, vol. viii. p. 5.

[4] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 4.

was one of the founders of the United Irishmen.[1] Archibald Hamilton Rowan was the son of wealthy parents and was educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself by being rusticated for attempting to throw a tutor into the Cam. In 1786 he succeeded his father in the command of the Killyleagh Volunteers, and seems to have been a foolish but fitfully good-natured young man, who was easily persuaded to join the United Irish by Wolfe Tone. In 1792 he was arrested on a charge of distributing a seditious paper beginning "Citizen soldiers, to arms!" but he was neither the author of the paper nor guilty of disseminating it. Two years afterwards, however, he was tried and found guilty, being fined £500, and imprisoned for two years.[2] James Napper Tandy was the son of a merchant in Dublin, and began life as an ironmonger in that city. He was a warm sympathiser with the colonies in their war with England, but afterwards became an ardent volunteer, and sought in many ways to gain notoriety. He was indeed an unpleasant political agitator, and one cannot help the conclusion that he endeavoured to bring himself before the public gaze chiefly by making himself offensive to his betters. As an ignorant man he was entirely carried away by the plausibility of the French principles, and being a leader of the advanced Protestant party in Dublin, Wolfe Tone considered he would be a useful ally and made him Secretary of the United Irish Society.[3] These were the most prominent United Irishmen at this date, all of them being Protestants with a strong republican tendency and with little religious ardour, although they objected to the system of paying tithes to the State Church. Many of the Society were Presbyterians, in whose minds still rankled the memory of the Test Act and the disabilities relating to marriage, but they had no such grievances as the Catholics, who were precluded from all political power. The poorer Catholic peasants indeed had their own society, called the Defenders, which arose from their quarrels with the "Peep of Day" boys, who were the poorer Presbyterians, the evidence leading to the conclusion that 1796.

[1] "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. v. p. 341.
[2] Ibid., vol. xlix. p. 332.
[3] Ibid., vol. lv. p. 353. Madden's "United Irishmen," vol. i. pp. 63–73.

1792 to 1794. the Protestants were the aggressors, although atrocious crimes were committed by both factions in the counties of Tyrone, Down, Louth, Meath, Cavan, and Monaghan in 1791 and 1792,[1] and three years later on September 21, 1795, a serious riot occurred in Armagh, which is known by the name of the Battle of the Diamond.[2] The United Irishmen were already in active correspondence with the French Government and hoped with its aid to affect a successful revolution, but at present nothing was arranged. The first important step was taken in December 1792, when one at least of the Catholic delegates, who came to London to present the petition of the Catholic Convention to the King, had an interview with the French Ambassador Chauvelin, and about the same time Lord Edward Fitzgerald, being in Paris on a visit to Paine, is said to have assured him that if the French would enable 4000 volunteers to subsist in Ireland for a few months, a Revolution could be effected. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs therefore sent an American named Oswald, who had volunteered in the French service, to Ireland to communicate with the disaffected, and to offer men and money if an insurrection could be made, but he was compelled to send the discouraging report to his Government that he saw no immediate prospect of active insurrection.[3] The Irish Ministers were already suspicious of the societies, and in February 1793 Lord Clonmel stated his belief that French emissaries were even now active among the Irish Defenders. A secret committee was therefore appointed by the House of Lords to investigate the subject, but no evidence was discovered that this was the case, and it clearly appeared that the Defenders limited themselves to the question of religious disabilities and had no wish to join in a rebellion. In 1794 Ireland was quiet, which was partly due to the defeat of the French and their excesses, but perhaps more to the political attitude of Grattan, who spoke strongly on the duty of Ireland to stand or fall with Great Britain. He had always, he said, maintained that Ireland should improve her constitution, in order to assimilate it as nearly as possible to that of Great Britain, and stated that if England

[1] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 12.
[2] Plowden, vol. ii. p. 539.
[3] Lecky's "History of the Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 2.

should be clearly involved in war it was his "idea that Ireland should grant her a decided and unequivocal support, except that war should be carried on against her own liberty."[1] Such ideas were not at all pleasing to the United Irishmen, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald considered them the worst doctrines ever laid down. A short time after Sir Laurence Parsons, who was far from friendly to Grattan, moved an address asking that copies of all the treaties and conventions which had been laid before the British Parliament should be laid before the Parliament of Ireland in order that they might discuss the cause and conduct of the war. Grattan strongly opposed this, arguing that if the Irish Parliament called for treaties at this critical moment it would be acquainting France with the fact that she had not made up her mind on the war, and the address was eventually rejected by 128 to 9. 1794.

In the spring of this year a new overture was made by the French Committee of Public Safety, who sent over an Anglican clergyman named William Jackson as an emissary, but the reverend gentleman was more confidential than diplomatic, and told his story to an attorney named Cockayne, who at once betrayed him. The Government had no intention of trapping such a valuable dove at present, and instructed Cockayne to take him to Ireland and introduce him to Leonard M'Nally, a Dublin barrister, who was much engaged in the proceedings of the United Irishmen. Jackson appears to have soon won the confidence of the leaders, and a representation of the state of Ireland, written by Wolfe Tone, was given to him to be presented to the French Government, with which he was so pleased that he wished Tone to take it himself. This valuable document was, of course, known to Cockayne, who sent it to the Government; and on April 24, 1794, Jackson was imprisoned on a charge of treason. In spite of the alarm caused by this arrest the United Irishmen persisted in their efforts to rouse an even stronger spirit of disloyalty, and to spread the opinion throughout the country that since the existing Government was a virtual coalition between the English Ministry and the Irish aristocracy, it would be easier to obtain a Republic 1794 to 1796

[1] "Life of Grattan," vol. iv. p. 145.

1794 to 1796. than Reform. These ideas were aided by the successes of the French, and a great spirit of restlessness arose similar to that which was spreading like a wave over the Continent. The Irish Parliament met on January 22, 1795, and Grattan again exhorted the country to support England, painting in vivid colours the dangers that menaced Europe from French ambition, and the ruin that would fall on Ireland if the English succumbed. But the die was already cast, and the contest between law and order and secret conspiracy began on April 25th, when Jackson was tried and found guilty of treason but recommended to mercy. The misguided exponent of religion did not wait to hear his fate, and taking a large dose of arsenic died in the dock as he was brought up for sentence.[1] The indirect result of this trial was very important and resulted in the loss of two of the ablest of the United Irishmen. Wolfe Tone, being deeply compromised in the Jackson conspiracy, acknowledged his crime and agreed to leave Ireland, provided he was not brought to trial, and these terms being granted, in May 1795 he sailed for Philadelphia. M'Nally, also frightened at the revolutionary tendency of the United Irish movement, and suspecting that the Government had damning evidence against him, decided to save himself by betraying the cause, but still remained counsel for, and the most devoted defender of the United Irishmen in the succeeding trials for treason. Although a brilliant lawyer he was always overwhelmed with debt, for the Government at first did not reward him at all handsomely for his information, but afterwards gave him a secret pension of £300 a year. Still the movement continued, and the United Irishmen, whose meetings had been forcibly suppressed in 1794, reconstructed their society in the following year on a far more republican and treasonable basis. There were now sixteen societies in Belfast alone, and between two and three thousand in all Ireland, the members being for the most part shopkeepers, merchants, clerks, a few physicians, farmers, and others, most of whom were Protestants. The Government was put in possession of their plots as soon as they were formed, and at the end of May, 1796, M'Nally informed that he had received clear hints that an invasion

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxv. p. 783.

was meditating, but in September James Tandy received letters from America stating that the French Resident there had informed his confidential friends of the Irish party that France would not attempt an invasion of Ireland until after a peace with Germany.[1] Nevertheless every precaution was taken, and at the end of the year, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended by Parliament, Grattan being one of the minority of seven who opposed the measure, but from the violent tone of his speeches it was evident that he thought the country was hastening to a great catastrophe. 1796.

[1] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 202.

CHAPTER III

Spirit of unrest at home—Severe repressive measures—Revolutionary spirit in Scotland—Excessive sentences and discussions on them in Parliament —Arrest of members of political societies—Suspension of Habeas Corpus Act—Report of Secret Committee in Parliament—Pitt forms a coalition Government—Disturbances caused by "crimping houses"—State Trials and their results—Grattan and the Irish Government—Appointment and speedy recall of Lord Fitzwilliam as Irish Viceroy — Foundation of Maynooth College—Trial of Warren Hastings—Method and speeches of Burke—Rise in price of wheat—General Election—New taxation.

1793. DURING this period of strife abroad and disaffection in Ireland, important social developments were taking place among the population at home. The members of the secret political societies were treated with the most severe punishments and penalties, while many prosecutions occurred for political offences in the Press, and several booksellers were convicted for selling Paine's "Rights of Man," and his "Address to the Addressers." Nevertheless the result of the prosecution of Wilks, the editor of the *North Briton*, who obtained damages for illegal arrest, and the action of the Lord Mayor, who decided that the printer of the *London Evening Post* had been illegally detained, had prepared the country to demand and expect great freedom in expressing opinion, and the Press had grown rapidly in importance during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[1] *The Times*, founded in 1788 by Mr. Walter, had already obtained the position of one of the leading organs, and many other newspapers speedily appeared. It was therefore to be expected that amongst them some extreme opinions should be found, and that the limited reading public, being less satiated with literature than at present, should be more influenced by printed words, but it is doubtful whether the few noisy agitators deserved the attention bestowed upon them by the law officers. Lord Chancellor Loughborough indeed advo-

[1] See James Grant, "The Newspaper Press."

cated the most rigorous measures,[1] and all the Ministers seemed to fear that French revolutionary principles would overwhelm the country, but, in the light of modern research, it is apparent that neither the character of the English people nor the extent of their grievances warranted such an assumption. One of the most famous trials at this time was that of the printers and proprietors of the *Morning Chronicle*, who were prosecuted for publishing the address of a political society at Derby, which abused generally all the institutions of the country, but they were found "Not Guilty" by the jury. It is indeed a difficult question to decide whether the Ministers voluntarily adopted the coercive policy or whether they considered the country wished for it, but there is no doubt the juries were unwilling to find verdicts against the prisoners, and frequently recommended them for mercy. 1793.

In Scotland also the revolutionary spirit was most violent, as were the measures instituted against it, but among the many trials for sedition that of Thomas Muir will always stand out most prominently. He was a Scottish advocate, and had taken an active part in politics as a member of the society called "The Friends of the People," but, finding a charge of sedition brought against him, retired to France. On his return to Ireland he was arrested. At his trial Muir maintained that his object had only been to effect a reform of the House of Commons, but the Lord Justice Clerk summed up strongly against him, and the jury, returning a verdict of guilty, he was sentenced to be transported for fourteen years to Botany Bay.[2] He however escaped and made his way to Nootka Sound, thence travelled along the coast to Panama, and across the Isthmus of Darien; and, after a short stay at Cuba, embarked on a Spanish frigate for Europe, and died at Chantilly in 1793.[3]

Another case of excessive sentence was that of the Rev. Thomas Palmer, who was condemned to transportation for seven years for distributing some papers of a seditious 1794. January to March

[1] Campbell's "Lives of the Lords Chancellors," vol. vi. pp. 256–257.

[2] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxiii. p. 118. In summing up the Lord Justice said, "He was evidently poisoning the minds of the common people, and preparing them for rebellion," p. 231.

[3] "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. xxxix. p. 268.

94. nuary March. character.[1] The "Friends of the People" now called together delegates from various parts of Scotland to assemble at Edinburgh, and soon over one hundred and fifty appeared, among them the agents of the "London Corresponding Society," and Lord Daer, the eldest son of the Earl of Selkirk. The proceedings of this body were merely those of a debating society with several theatrical accessories, borrowed for the most part from the Convention at Paris, such as prefixing to each member's name the title Citizen. The chief subjects of abuse were the aristocracy and chieftains of the Highlands, but notwithstanding the childish character of these proceedings, they were stopped by the magistrates in December, and three of the leaders, Skirving, Margarot, and Gerrald were sentenced to the preposterous treatment of transportation for fourteen years. In Ireland the same system was pursued, and at the beginning of 1794 Hamilton Rowan, now secretary of the "Society of United Irishmen," was found guilty and sentenced to two years by the King's Bench of Dublin, for issuing an address of a seditious character to the Volunteers of Dublin. He however managed to escape and made his way to France.

1794. May. Many of these cases were discussed in Parliament,[2] but the language of Lord Stanhope, Fox, and Sheridan was as violent against the Judges and the Government as the sentences were excessive, and the Ministers easily commanded overwhelming majorities. Indeed Fox, by his openly avowed sympathy with the French, and his bitter hostility to the English Government, alienated many of the moderate Whigs, and his best arguments were often spoilt by the violence of his language. Early in May another strong measure was taken. Eight members of the "Corresponding Society" and the Society for "Constitutional Information" were examined on a charge of high treason before the Privy Council and sent to the Tower to await trial. These were Thomas Hardy, a shoemaker, Daniel Adams, a clerk, John Horne Tooke, the Reverend Jeremiah Joyce, John Thelwall, John Bonney, John Richter, and John Lovett. Their papers

[1] "State Trials," vol. xxiii. p. 237.

[2] House of Lords, January 29 and April 25, 1794. House of Commons, March 10, 1794. "Parliamentary History," vols. xxx. and xxxi.

and books, which were seized, were then examined by a Committee of Secrecy consisting of twenty-one Members of Parliament, who found that they afforded ample proofs of a traitorous conspiracy.[1] Acting on this opinion, Pitt decided to bring in a Bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, trusting that the report of the Committee would justify him in the eyes of the country for adopting such a severe measure, and since the public had no means of ascertaining at this time the real intentions of the Societies, it supported him with zeal and enthusiasm. In due course he began a long speech in the Commons by arguing that from the report of the Secret Committee it was evident a plan had been digested and acted upon to "assemble a pretended convention of the people for the purposes of assuming to itself the character of a general representation of the Nation." 1794. May

He further pointed out that a correspondence had been carried on between the Societies and the Jacobin Club in Paris, and that they had "formed a settled design to disseminate the same principles and sow the same seeds of ruin in their own country."[2] Fox, on the other hand, was never "more surprised in his life than that those who framed the report, men of such talents and character, should have thought it necessary to recommend so sudden, so violent, so alarming a remedy as that which had been proposed—a proposal grounded upon facts which had been, all of them, notorious for years;"[3] and Mr. Sheridan gave as his opinion that liberty of speech and liberty of Parliamentary proceedings would not long remain if the measure passed, "which was one of the most daring, abominable, and unprecedented that had ever been offered to the consideration of a British House of Commons." Mr. Burke took the view that the papers which the Secret Committee inspected proved "that those Societies were so formed as to spread far and wide into every corner of the kingdom and acquire by the correspondence they had established in all parts of Great Britain a majority of the people who, by becoming the admirers of the French Revolution, always held up to them as a Government

[1] *Annual Register*, 1794. Part i., p. 266.
[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxi. p. 499.
[3] Ibid., p. 506.

1794. superior to their own, would ultimately be led to frame one of their own upon its model."[1] After such arguments, and in ignorance of the contents of the papers seized, the Bill was nevertheless passed by 201 Ayes to 39 Noes.

1794 July. On July 11th the Session closed, and some important changes were made in the Cabinet, the third Secretaryship of State, suppressed at the Peace of 1782, being restored. Lord Grenville remained Foreign Secretary, and Dundas retained the charge of War and Colonies, but the Duke of Portland relieved him of the duties relating to Home Affairs and the Government of Ireland. Earl Fitzwilliam succeeded to the post of Lord President on the death of Lord Camden, and Earl Spencer became Privy Seal on the retirement of the Marquis of Stafford. Mr. Windham was appointed Secretary at War—an office long since abolished—with a seat in the Cabinet. Among the late supporters of Fox, Mr. Thomas Grenville, brother of Lord Grenville, now supported the Government, and Burke intended to retire into private life, and was granted a pension of £1200 a year. Pitt's new Whig allies, Portland, Spencer, and Windham, brought a great accession of strength to the Tory Ministry, and also a great number of votes; but the coalition led at once to a misunderstanding, for the Duke expected to have all the patronage which had belonged to Dundas, who intended to retain it himself, and immediately threatened to resign if it were taken from him, upon which the King ordered him to remain at his post and continue the conduct of the war.[2]

The summer of 1794 was disturbed by several riots in London, caused by the rumour of the existence of "crimping houses" in which men were caught and forcibly enlisted as soldiers. In one case a young man named George Howe threw himself from an upper window of a house in a court near Charing Cross, and was killed on the spot. At the coroner's inquest it was shown that it was a house of ill-fame and had no connection of any kind with recruiting. But the mob, without waiting for the evidence, became infuriated by the supposition that a man had committed suicide to escape from compulsory service, and demolished

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxi. p. 519.
[2] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. ii. p. 255.

the inside of the house before they were dispersed by a party of soldiers. Another case of the same kind occurred shortly afterwards. A recruit at Banbury, Edward Barrett, declared he was made drunk by two recruiting sergeants in London, forced to sign, and then deprived of his silver watch and shoe-buckles. On examination of the sergeants, who were tried at the Old Bailey, it was proved that Barrett had neither watch nor buckles on him at the time he was supposed to have been robbed, and the jury found a verdict of "Not Guilty," Barrett being sent to prison to be tried for perjury. The mob, however, did not wait for the result of the trial, and attacked the "White Horse" public-house in which Barrett was made to drink, and also several other recruiting houses in the neighbourhood of Holborn and Clerkenwell. These disturbances fortunately did not lead to bloodshed, and the rioting may have served a good purpose as a safety-valve for the revolutionary spirit which existed among the lawless roughs of the city. They were, however, quite a distinct body from the theoretical political plotters who were seduced by the high-sounding phraseology of the French Revolution. 1794.

Although now, in the light of a quiet analysis of evidence, the dangers of revolution were extremely remote, the Government was led away by its own oratory and by the rhetoric of Burke, who, in his anxiety to apply a sedative to the revolutionary spirit of the time, chiefly succeeded in exaggerating its terrors. But if the spirit of unrest had caused several obscure persons to seek notoriety and air their opinions in debating societies, it had also led other more dangerous, if equally unpractical revolutionists, to prepare pikes and other instruments of destruction. No doubt such methods could easily have been met by an application of the ordinary laws, but the Government considered it necessary to institute elaborate State trials against the members of the Societies who had been arrested in May. These people, without influence or power, were by this means raised to the position of dangerous leaders of sedition, causing their supporters to regard them as martyrs, and, while increasing the fears of the timid, the sympathies of the disaffected were also roused. But if it were a bad principle to exaggerate

1794. the importance of these misguided persons, their trials were nevertheless conducted in the most fair and impartial manner. The first was that of the shoemaker, Thomas Hardy,[1] and began on October 28th before Lord Chief Justice Eyre and a special jury, Sir John Scott, the Attorney-General, opening with a long speech in which he sought to show that the object of the "Corresponding Society," of which Hardy was secretary, was to abolish the monarchy, and set up a national Convention as in France.

1794. October. The doctrines of the Society were largely borrowed from Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man," and the resolutions of the London Corresponding Society were that every individual had a right to share in the government of that Society of which he is a member; that it was the duty of every citizen to keep a watchful eye to see that oppressive laws were not passed; that the people of Great Britain were not properly represented in Parliament; that the only remedy was a fair and impartial representation of the people in Parliament; and that this Society "aims at reform, not anarchy, reason, firmness, and unanimity to be the only arms they employ, or persuade their fellow-citizens to exert, against abuse of power."[2] The Attorney-General proceeded to argue that they meant by "a representative government the direct contrary of the government which is established here," and that "it is necessarily to be inferred from their principles that they did mean to assert, when they were ripe for it, No King no Parliament;" "it is not my imputation that they did express their opinion in the language No King no Parliament, but I say that they expressed their opinion in language which, when accurately looked at, as forcibly impart the ideas, as if they had used the words No King no Parliament." This kind of argument was the strongest Sir John could formulate from the evidence in the papers which had been seized, but whatever may have really been the motives of the Societies nothing was discovered of any value as proof of high treason, even when the most extensive possible meaning to the term was applied. Nor was the evidence of the Crown witnesses at all more damning, but rather brought

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxiv. p. 19.
[2] Ibid., p. 294.

out even more plainly that the ideas of the Societies were chiefly directed to reform of Parliament, and were not at all directed against the Monarchy. 1794. October.

At the end of the first day, Mr. Erskine, counsel for the prisoner, complained that he had not been allowed to examine the papers seized and quoted for the prosecution, and Lord Chief Justice Eyre agreed that he should have a reasonable opportunity to cast his eyes over them before he prepared his speech for the defence. The trial then continued, and the evidence of messengers, printers, and members of the Societies dragged on day after day, with long accounts of toast lists to be drunk at the anniversary dinner in which "success to the arms of Freedom," "the true patriots of Ireland," "a speedy and honourable peace with France," and other sentiments were expressed. Evidence was given one day of the preparation of pikes at Sheffield, which proved that serious rioting was intended; but on another the absurd statement was given, as evidence of high treason, that one of the members spoke of a defeat of the British Army as good news. Another witness deposed that Baxter, an active member of the Society, had said that he did not wish the King or any of his family should lose their lives but that "they might go to Hanover," and he thought that some blood would be shed, mentioning the names of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas. All these witnesses, Mr. Erskine, as counsel for the prisoner, cross-examined with great skill, causing many to contradict themselves. He also attempted to affect the jury by branding others as spies. Nor did he fail to object to hearsay evidence, and in his speech for the defence on November 1st, showed conclusively that, although to conspire against the King's lawful authority, if such a conspiracy had indeed existed, was a great crime, it was not high treason as defined by the Act of Edward the Third.[1] On the ensuing days the Duke of Richmond gave evidence that he had written a letter to Colonel Sharman, in 1783, from which strong expressions urging a Reform in Parliament had been often quoted in the correspondence of the Societies, and Lord

[1] In all the "State Trials" at this period in England and afterwards in Ireland, long discussions took place as to the meaning of the word treason, but no rigid definition was decided upon.

1794. October

Lauderdale, Mr. Sheridan, and others bore witness to the peaceable conduct of Hardy and his friends. By this time the public and the Court fully realised that the indictment could not be substantiated, but another speech for the prisoner was made by his second counsel, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, and the Solicitor-General, Sir John Mitford, replied on behalf of the Crown in an address lasting ten hours. On the eighth day of the trial the Lord Chief Justice summed up the case with strict impartiality, and stated that he agreed with the counsel for the prisoner, "that if he (the prisoner) is this day to be convicted he ought to be—*proveablement attaint, i.e.*, the proof ought to be clear and convincing." The jury then retired at 12.30, and returned three hours later with a verdict of "Not Guilty." It is difficult to understand how the Government failed to recognise that their evidence was not strong enough to convict, and that these proceedings only brought discredit upon themselves, but even after this decided result they determined to procede with a second case. This step was not only foolish but contrary to precedent, for it was, and has always been, unusual in State prosecutions, when several persons have been imprisoned on the same charge, and when one has been acquitted, not to liberate them all. John Horne Tooke[1] was next put upon his trial, and Erskine was again counsel for the accused, but the prisoner himself took an active part in his defence, indulging in many witty sallies and repartees. This case, even more than the last, was made an excuse for summoning eminent Members of Parliament to give their opinions, and after Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond had stated the part they had taken in urging on reform, Messrs. Fox, Sheridan, and Philip Francis gave Mr. Tooke a good character, and opined that his political opinions were not extreme. The jury after a few minutes brought in a verdict of "Not Guilty." A third case against John Thelwall was attended by the same result, and the other prisoners were then discharged.

These prosecutions were very unpopular and their results were acclaimed by the crowds, but the Ministry was now supported both by their own party and by many of the

[1] "State Trials," vol. xxv. p. 2.

Whig chiefs and their followers, and so easily commanded overwhelming majorities in both Houses. Most of the debates in this session referred to the war directly or indirectly, the legislation of the period being unimportant and dealing chiefly with the position of the East India Company and their stocks, with treason bills, and with measures relating to trade, shipping, and domestic servants. Although Mr. Wilberforce, an old supporter of the Prime Minister, and a few others now urged for peace, on the question of continuing the war the Government was supported by great majorities, and the failure of the Duke of York and his force caused even a stronger determination to pursue the contest until the nation was left undoubtedly the victor.[1] This stolid perseverance is characteristic of the British nation, and enables it eventually to succeed in almost every undertaking, but usually at a cost in life and treasure which is many times greater than the most fearsome had anticipated. 1794. October

Pitt now directed his attention to Ireland, where the condition of the country was growing more alarming every day. The policy of Downing Street at that time—as it has often been since—was to combine conciliation with repressive measures. In 1793 a Roman Catholic Relief Bill was carried, and also Acts to prevent the importation of arms or military stores, and to prohibit the appointment of delegates to unlawful assemblies. Prosecutions were also instituted for libel, and, with more reason, against the traitors who were conspiring with France. In this anxious condition of affairs Pitt considered that great advantage might be derived if his new Whig allies would concert with Grattan, and if the latter would support a new Irish Government. With this idea he proposed to recall the Earl of Westmoreland, and to send Earl Fitzwilliam in his stead as Viceroy, and to appoint Mr. George Ponsonby, one of the leaders of the Irish Whigs, Attorney-General of Ireland, so that the Duke of Portland, as Home Secretary, would be in direct communication with his Whig friends in Ireland. 1794.

[1] When Pitt represented to the King that his favourite son must be recalled he at once acquiesced, but immediately on his landing made him a Field-Marshal and Commander-in-Chief. See "Memoirs of George III.," p. 210; "Life of Pitt," vol. ii., Appendix xxi., xxii.

1794. But Grattan and his friends required other concessions to which Pitt could not yield, such as the removal of the Chancellor, Lord Fitzgibbon, and other steady supporters of the Government. At this time Pitt had several conversations with Grattan, and the biographer of the latter states that he promised not to oppose the Roman Catholic question if the Government were pressed on the point.[1] It is, however, clear that Pitt did not intend that Fitzwilliam should alter any of the established principles of the Government of Ireland, or that any of the supporters of the Government should be displaced. Eventually Fitzwilliam was appointed, and Westmoreland was made Master of the Horse.

95. ebruary. The appointment of the new Viceroy was by no means a happy one, for he at once dismissed Mr. John Beresford, Chief Commissioner of the Revenue, and Mr. Edward Cooke, Secretary of State, although he had promised to make no changes. In public measures he was equally rash and precipitate; he had been instructed by Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland on no account to bring forward the emancipation of the Catholics as a Cabinet measure, but to promise that if Grattan insisted on pressing it at once, the Ministers in England would deliberate on it and consider how far they could in prudence or in policy give it support.[2] Instead of carefully feeling his way, Fitzwilliam at once received addresses from bodies of Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters and appeared to agree to their wishes. The excitement grew intense; petitions for complete emancipation poured in from every part of the country, and Grattan, feeling that his hand was forced, hastily brought in his Bill on the 12th of February. Opposition to it was at once keen and widespread. The King strongly disapproved of the scheme for bringing about what he called "a total change of the principles of Government which have been followed in the kingdom since the abdication of King James the Second,"[3] and many of Pitt's supporters also were seriously adverse,

[1] See Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. ii. p. 286. Lord Stanhope thinks Grattan must have misunderstood Pitt, and brings forward evidence that the latter refused at this time to commit the Cabinet to any decisive step.

[2] Lord Fitzwilliam to Lord Carlisle. Lecky, vol. vii. p. 51. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. ii. p. 301.

[3] Ibid., p. 304.

while resentment and alarm seized the minds of the aristocratic Irish Protestants and the inhabitants of the North. Under these circumstances the only step to be taken was to recall Lord Fitzwilliam, which was done at once, to the joy of the Protestants but to the sorrow of the Roman Catholics, and the new Viceroy, Lord Camden, was sworn in at Dublin amidst a formidable riot. Motions in both Houses of Parliament on the recall followed, but the Government refused to discuss the circumstances for the reason that it would be disadvantageous to the public service. 1795.

Thus were the hopes of equal laws for Ireland dashed to the ground through the hasty, injudicious action of Lord Fitzwilliam, but nevertheless there is no doubt that the Government could not have carried a measure granting Catholic emancipation to Ireland through the English Parliament at this period. One pressing grievance was, however, at once removed. The students for the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church had been trained in foreign colleges at Douay, St. Omer, and other French schools, and some at Coimbra and Salamanca, but the Revolution had destroyed most of the French colleges and no others could be found. Archbishop Troy therefore, on behalf of the Roman Catholic prelates, had presented a memorial in 1794 to Lord Westmoreland for the endowment of an ecclesiastical academy in Ireland. This project was favourably entertained, and the College of Maynooth was instituted in the spring of the following year.

The founders of the college hoped that the Irish priests would have less democratic ideas if trained at home, and more attachment to the English Constitution.[1] It was also expected that this establishment, voted by Protestants for the sake of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, would be a sign of the goodwill felt between the two sects.[2] Against it may be argued that it was very unusual for a Government to endow an establishment for teaching principles

[1] Wolfe Tone's biographer states that it had been the object of the enemies of the Catholic cause to create divisions between the clergy and the laity. "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 118.

[2] Burke was anxious that the Catholic college should be entirely under priestly control. "Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 320.

. which were not those of the State religion, but that at the
ruary. time it was a politic act there can be no doubt, for it was particularly desirable to propitiate as far as possible the Roman Catholics, who were suffering from a keen disappointment, but had shown themselves to be as loyal and peaceable as the Protestants.

Another famous trial which brought discredit to the Government and the Opposition alike was now drawing to a close, for in February 1795 the House of Lords proceeded to discuss in Committee the bearing of the evidence on each of the charges against Warren Hastings, the trial having already lasted for eight years. It is unnecessary here to recapitulate the history of the charges, since they have long ceased to be of interest for themselves, but the whole impeachment throws much light on the methods of Government, and the extraordinary power of mere oratory, without evidence, to affect men's minds at this date.

Most of the charges were framed by Burke with the aid of Francis, who, after steadily opposing the Governor-General in Council in India on all occasions, pursued him with the most malicious vindictiveness after his return home. Francis had a suspicious mind, always prone to see the worst characteristics of others, and to attribute base motives whenever possible; he possesses the distinction of being one of the many reputed authors of the Letters of Junius.[1] Burke was easily persuaded to listen to his charges,[2] and in course of time was entirely carried away by the exuberance of his own verbosity, as has happened to many orators since, so that his arguments and reasoning became mystified and obscured by a luxuriant wealth of words containing neither sense nor justice. Fox joined in the charge against the late servant of the Government; and Pitt, professing to think Hastings had been rather severe in his punishments, suddenly veered round and also supported the impeachment, but it is still doubtful what were his motives for so doing.

1787 The idea of justice in Burke's mind at this time may be gathered from his correspondence: "Of this I am certain,

[1] "Junius," by Wade, vol. ii. p. 30.

[2] See his letter to Francis, December 10, 1785. "Burke Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 38. Merivale's "Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis," vol. ii. pp. 287–288.

that a general evil intention, manifested through a long series, and a great variety of acts, ought to have much greater weight with a public political tribunal than such detached and unrelated offences into which common human infirmity has often betrayed the most splendid characters in history."[1] Imagine attempting to put a man upon his trial for a general evil intention at the present day. The method of securing recruits for his cause is well shown in a letter to Dundas, March 25, 1787. He warns him of the strength of the Hastings faction: "This body, if they should now obtain a triumph, will be too strong for your Ministry, or for any Ministry." "Nothing can rescue the country out of their hands but our vigorous use of the present fortunate moment—which, if once lost, is never to be recovered—for breaking up this corrupt combination, by effectually crushing the leader and principal members of the corps. The triumph of that faction will not be over us, who are not the keepers of the Parliamentary force, but over you."[2] 1787.

Dundas does not appear to have been very alarmed at the prospect of the Government being upset by the Hastings faction, but neither Pitt nor he discountenanced the proceedings. But although Burke's methods at this time cannot rouse any admiration or respect, there is little doubt that he honestly thought he was in some manner benefiting oppressed humanity in impeaching Warren Hastings.[3] Now that Pitt's party was added to that of Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, it was of no consequence whether there was sufficient evidence or not, for these great leaders could always count on many docile followers, and so the Commons on May 10, 1787, decided to impeach Warren Hastings for high crimes and misdemeanours at the bar of the House of Lords, by a majority of nearly three to one. A committee of twenty commoners, headed by Burke, was appointed to conduct the trial, but the real author of the impeachment,

[1] "Burke's Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 42. Ibid., p. 52.

[2] Ibid., p. 52.

[3] The various opinions which have since been given of this action of Burke's depend chiefly on the temperament of the historian, and whether he has imperialistic instincts or not. Compare, for example, Lord Macaulay and Mr. John Morley. But there can be no doubt that Burke was not justified, with the evidence at his disposal, in making the charges he did.

1787. Francis, was very properly excluded from a place upon the committee.

Burke's speeches, which strongly affected the audience at the time, but which are merely interesting now as an example of his wonderful command of the English language, abound in the most ridiculous exaggerations and conceits, which could not have convinced any thoughtful person the day after they were delivered. Fox and Grey, who had not been coached by Francis, could only make speeches on the documents, and not being witnesses of the terrible crimes with which Hastings was charged, were unable to give any evidence which would now be listened to for a moment in a court of law. In fact, this extraordinary trial was scarcely at all a solemn and serious sifting of evidence of witnesses, but chiefly a series of speeches by orators with strong prejudices, whose information was second-hand. An example of Burke's style will show how entirely he was carried beyond the realms of sober reason and justice. On Friday, February 15, 1788, before an enormous concourse, who had flocked to hear the great orator, Burke began his speech. After stating that the managers of the impeachment were unanimous, and that they knew and had made allowance for human infirmity and human error, he continued: "But the crimes we charge are not the crimes and effects of common human nature and frailty, such as we know and feel and can allow for; they are crimes which have their rise in the wicked dispositions of men; they are crimes which have their rise in avarice, rapacity, pride, cruelty, ferocity, malignity of temper, haughtiness, insolence; in short, in everything that manifests a heart blackened to the very blackest, a heart dyed deep in blackness, a heart gangreened to the very core."[1]

1794. In 1789, seventeen sittings were occupied in investigating the charge of receiving presents, in the following year but little progress was made, and in 1791 the charge of corruption was brought up, the other charges being dropped by general consent. Indeed, to have proceeded with the whole twenty-two with the same speed would have occupied the lives of two or three generations.[2]

[1] "Burke's Speeches," vol. iv. p. 303.

[2] The articles of the charges occupy 366 pages in vols. iv. and v. of Burke's Works, and deal with the whole range of Warren Hastings' administration.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A. pinx.

Walker & Cockerell, ph. sc.

Right Hon. Warren Hastings.

This year Hastings read his defence, which clearly showed 1794.
he was an innocent man, but two more years were occupied by Law, the future Lord Ellenborough, in stating the case for the prisoner, and then Burke finally summed up for the prosecution, concluding his wonderful speech on June 16, 1794, in the following words: "My Lords, it is not the criminality of the prisoner—it is not the claims of the Commons to demand judgment to be passed upon him—it is not the honour and dignity of this court, and the welfare of millions of the human race that alone call upon you. When the devouring flames shall have destroyed this perishable globe, and it sinks into the abyss of nature, from whence it was commanded into existence by the Great Author of it —then, my Lords, when all nature, kings and judges themselves must answer for their actions, there will be found what supersedes creation itself, Eternal Justice. It was the attribute of the great God of Nature before worlds were; it will recede with him when they perish; and the earthly portion of it committed to your care is now solemnly deposited in your hands by the Commons of England. My Lords, I have done."[1]

Many may regret that the days of oratory are over, but none can regret that it has been replaced by quick and keen reasoning in the Courts of Justice. At this period, as we have shown, it was the practice of politicians to make long speeches at most of the important trials, in spite of the fact that as a rule they had no evidence to give, but merely stated that they had known the accused, and considered his opinions were or were not treasonable, according to the side for which they were subpœnaed. These oratorical efforts do not appear to have affected the juries of the day to any great extent, or to have influenced the course of justice, but they were patiently heard, and no juryman complained that his time was being occupied. In the House of Lords the impeachment of Warren Hastings was one of the occasions on which Burke used his oratory to the utmost, and it is easy to see that he had worked himself up to believe in his terrible charges, just as an actor endeavours to feel the part he is playing, but just as the latter may succeed in deceiving for

[1] "Burke's Speeches," vol. iv. p. 511.

1794. the moment, directly the curtain descends the delusion disappears, and we realise that the whole is but a representation —so it was with Burke's speeches at this famous trial.[1]

1795. By the end of March 1795, the "immense quantity of rubbish and trash"—as the late Chancellor Thurlow, who had taken the lead throughout the trial, called it—had been sifted of "the very little evidence" it contained, and twenty-nine peers solemnly declared Hastings "Not guilty." After seven years of suspense a great empire builder was indeed declared guiltless of the charges brought against him but was left penniless, the whole of his fortune of £70,000 being swallowed up by his defence. Neither Pitt nor Fox would ever have given him office, but his great services could not be overlooked, and the Court of Directors and Proprietors of the East India Company voted him a pension of £4000 a year, with a loan of £50,000 free of interest.[2]

The Government was now very unpopular, the war on the Continent was unsuccessful, the State trials had resulted in acquittals, and led to the idea that they were instituted by tyrants on insufficient evidence; the Press were strongly attacking the Ministers, and a bad harvest combined with a cold June, in which many sheep and lambs died, forced up the price of provisions almost to famine height. Wheat, which in 1792 had averaged 43s. per quarter, and in February 1795 had reached 58s., in August rose to 108s., and in September was still as high as 78s. The duty from 1791 to 1803 on foreign wheat imported was 6d. per quarter when the price was 54s. or more, but when below 54s. but over 50s. it rose to 2s. 6d. per quarter, and when the price was below 50s. the duty was 24s. 3d., which was practically prohibitive.

Meanwhile the Corresponding Society held several meetings where a great deal was talked about Freedom, Plenty, Slavery, and Want, but the only practical steps proposed were universal suffrage and annual Parliaments, the former of which was realised seventy years after this date and the latter never will be.

[1] An interesting and able defence of Burke's action is given in Mr. John Morley's work on that statesman. See pp. 127 *et seq.*

[2] "Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings," by Gleig.

Parliament met on October 29, 1795, and Mr. Pitt at once brought in a measure to enable bakers to mix Indian corn, potatoes, and inferior grain with their wheat before making bread, and a bounty was granted on the import of wheat and other articles of food.[1] On November 6th, Lord Grenville brought in a Bill defining and extending the law of treason,[2] and declaring that any person who should attempt to stir up the people to hatred of the King's person or of the established Government and Constitution should be liable to the penalties of a high misdemeanour. Further, an Act was passed enabling Magistrates to disperse any seditious meeting by force if necessary. The Whigs resented this infringement of the liberties of the subject, and Fox presided over a meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster, who presented a petition to Parliament; but the majority of the people, not wishing to exercise their freedom at the price of the peace and quiet of others, accepted the measures without complaining, and in spite of the exertions of the Opposition in only a few counties could the people be persuaded to declare against them. 1795.

The debates in Parliament showed much wit and smart repartee on both sides, but the arguments themselves are only interesting to those who revel in the logomachies of definitions of liberty and have no importance as history. On December 7th, Pitt brought forward his Budget, in which a second loan of £18,000,000 and several new taxes were proposed. Parliament met in February 1796, and the discussion of the proposed new taxes was resumed; the first being a legacy duty on personal, and the other on real or landed property.[3] The former varied from 2 per cent. when the property passed to brothers or sisters, to 6 per cent. when it passed to strangers in blood, but widows and children of the testator were exempt altogether. Fox and the Whigs opposed this on the ground that it would expose the secrets of every one to the world, and that "a great hardship would be cast on illegitimate children." Grey followed in the same strain, but in a division the minority was only 16 against 46. 1796. February.

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 235.
[2] Ibid., p. 244. [3] Ibid., pp. 1026–1032.

1796. February. It is interesting to note that at the present time the Liberal party act upon directly opposite principles, and are responsible for most of the legacy duties. The duty on landed estate affected great numbers on both sides of the House, and many supporters of the Government absented themselves, since they were unwilling either to support the measure or to oppose Pitt. On the division the final numbers were 54 against 54, and the Speaker gave his casting vote with the Yeas, but Pitt declared that as so many were opposed to the Bill he would postpone it for three months,[1] but as a matter of fact dropped it altogether, and it was not revived until 1853, when Mr. Gladstone brought in his Budget.

There can be no doubt of the justice of taxing landed property as heavily as any other form of capital, but in practice there are many objections to levying a tax upon real estate, which has to be paid on the death of the possessor. In the first place, shares in companies or railway stock can be easily realised, but land cannot be sold without breaking up estates and disorganising whole communities. On the other hand, by spreading the payments over several years, as is done now, the owner can still retain his property, and if he curtails his expenditure, by letting his house or sporting estate, he can often pay the duty out of his income, but this is a step which is highly objectionable and inconvenient to him. Again, if several successions occur rapidly it is almost impossible to keep the estate out of the market. It would therefore appear that an equally just and much more convenient plan would be to estimate the receipts due to legacy duties from land, then increase the land taxes so as to bring in the same revenue, and abolish the duties on succession altogether. But this is a digression. The failure of the Bill compelled Pitt to have recourse to a further loan of £7,500,000, and to place an increased tax on horses and tobacco. At this time also Mr. Dent proposed a tax of half-a-crown on every dog kept, except those which led the blind; but although this was not imposed until a subsequent date it formed the subject of much humorous debate at this time.

1796. May. In May the Parliament had run for its septennial period and it was dissolved. Fox was opposed by the extreme Radical,

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1041.

Horne Tooke, but was returned for Westminster by a large majority with his late Ministerial colleague, Admiral Sir Alan Gardner. The country at this date seems to have considered that the Tory government was the only possible one while the war lasted, and the general election made practically no difference to Pitt's majority. The new Parliament opened on October 6th, and the King's speech announced the renewal of negotiations with France for peace,[1] and adverted to the fact that the enemy had "openly manifested an intention of attempting a descent on these kingdoms."[2] The Government at once brought forward their measures of defence, Pitt proposing a levy of 15,000 men for the sea service and the regiments of the line, and of 60,000 Militia, and suggested that a considerable force of irregular cavalry should be formed with a view of repelling the invader, who would necessarily be short of horses.[3] Further suggestions were that of the 200,000 horses kept for pleasure 20,000 might be taken, if required, for the public service, and that the 7000 gamekeepers who had taken out licenses might be formed into bodies of men to harass the operations of the enemy. Fox resisted some of these proposals moderately but often allowed his antipathy to the Government to appear, and at the end of a sensible speech on October 18th, in which he had doubted the intention of the French to invade the country, argued strongly against compulsory service, and wished to know what security the country had against an abuse of the power of raising these forces, he concluded in language more suitable to the members of the secret political societies. "What is the duty of this House at this moment? To cherish the spirit of freedom in the people; to restore to them that for which their ancestors bled; to make the Ministers really responsible. Let their Parliament not be confiding in the servants of the Crown but watchful and jealous of the exercise of their power. In one word, instead of amusing them with panegyrics upon the form, allow them to possess the spirit of the old constitution of England." Mr. Sheridan also doubted the idea of a proposed invasion,

1796. May.

1796. October.

[1] See the "First Malmesbury Mission," *ante*, pp. 31–36.
[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1175.
[3] Ibid., p. 1208.

1796. October. and opined that "the plan now in agitation points to a very different object, that it is in the contemplation of Ministers to prolong the war with the view of extending our possessions in the West Indies."[1]

But these kind of statements only succeeded in alienating the more moderate Whigs, and when Fox proceeded on a later date to wish "that the mass of the people of Ireland should be treated like men, not like oxen or sheep,"[2] and stated that the Government there was merely "a contemptible monopoly under the name of a Parliament," Mr. Wilberforce, after stating his regret that all parties were not drawn together by the common danger, said "he believed they (the Opposition) would not be displeased at any small mischief befalling the country, if they could take advantage of it to get Ministers turned out of office,"[3] which opinion Sheridan at once stigmatised as the most extraordinary and unprovoked libel he had ever heard in the House.

But while politicians were debating, and Generals were fighting, and diplomatists were fencing, the people as usual were putting their hands in their pockets to find the wherewithal to continue the contest. When Pitt announced a new loan of £18,000,000 at 5 per cent., to be taken at £112, 10s., with an option to be paid off at par within two years of a peace, the whole was subscribed "in fifteen hours and twenty minutes, namely two hours on Thursday, six on Friday, six on Saturday, and one hour and twenty minutes on Monday."[4] These terms, which in our day would seem extremely favourable for the investor, were not so at that time of danger and distress, and the undertaking was a source of loss to the subscribers so far as the market value was concerned. In spite of the practical loyalty of the wealthy it was still necessary to raise £2,000,000 extra by taxes to pay the interest on the new loan, and to carry on the operation of the sinking fund. Higher rates were therefore placed on tea, British and foreign spirits, sugar, houses, stage coaches and postage, all of which were opposed vigorously by Fox and Grey.

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1215.
[2] Ibid., p. 1248.
[3] Ibid., p. 1253.
[4] *Annual Register*, p. 1796, part ii. p. 44.

CHAPTER IV

Leaders of United Irish in Paris—French Directory decide to invade Ireland—Measures of English Government—French fleet avoid the English and arrive in Bantry Bay—Prevented from landing by a gale—Return to France—The Legion Noire—Bank crisis in England—Bank ordered to stop cash payments—Unrestricted paper currency—Death of Burke—Debate on the Slave trade—Anarchy in Ireland—Action of General Lake—Severe measures of military—Tone in Paris—Dr. M'Nevins' "Memoir" to French Directory—M'Nally informs the Government—Dutch fleet delayed by foul winds but ultimately sails from the Texel.

1796. May.

When Wolfe Tone arrived in Philadelphia, he soon discovered his old friends and fellow-conspirators, Reynolds, Napper Tandy, and Rowan, and at once entered into close relations with the French Minister to the United States. De la Croix was now strongly in favour of invading Ireland and persuaded his Government to invite Tone to Paris to aid in the preparation, who at once accepted the mission and arrived in France at the end of January 1796.[1] Most of the negotiations between the seditious party and the French Government had been carried on through the medium of French Ministers in neutral countries, and in May 1796 Reinhard, the French Minister at Hamburg, wrote to De la Croix that Lord Edward Fitzgerald had arrived there for the express purpose of opening a negotiation. He talked of 150,000 men rising, 10,000 Defenders being armed and ready, and stated that when the French arrived with a fleet a general insurrection would follow.[2] In the following month Arthur O'Connor appeared and stated the same story, adding that the Dissenters of the north were even more determined than the Catholics of the south to rebel, and that the militia would go with the people.[3]

1796. November.

By this time Tone had arrived in Paris, been created an adjutant-general of the French army, and was busily engaged planning an Irish expedition with the French Government.

[1] Tone's "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 200.

[2] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 236.

[3] Ibid., p. 237.

1796. November. Tone's ideas were largely influenced by his wishes, and his information was very far from accurate. He stated that with 20,000 French troops success was certain, and that even the small number of 5000 might be sufficient, all of whom ought to be landed near Belfast;[1] that the priests would offer no serious opposition; that all the Protestant Dissenters were to a man republicans; that the merchants and traders, who chiefly composed the Catholic Committee, were for the most part sincere republicans and attached to the cause of France, and that the bulk of the Catholics were in the lowest degree of misery and want, and were prepared for any change. In fact the only part of the population who appeared to Tone to be loyal were the members of the Established Church, who, he thought, numbered about one-tenth of the population. He was also of the opinion that two-thirds of the British navy were Irishmen, whereas Ireland from the commencement of the war until November 1, 1796, really furnished 11,457 men for the navy and 4058 for the marines.[2]

Carried away by the hopeful and enthusiastic spirit of Tone, Fitzgerald, and O'Connor, the French determined to attempt an invasion, but first sent over Richard O'Shea to study the situation, to discover the leaders of the Defenders, and to regulate its organisation. He was instructed to promise that 10,000 men with arms for 20,000 would speedily arrive either in the north in the counties of Derry or Antrim, or else in the west on the coast of Galway, and to advise that disturbances should be excited in Munster and Leinster, and especially in Dublin, so as to draw the British forces to the south and to the capital. De la Croix had suggested that the insurrection should precede the invasion, but the Irish delegates objected to the plan, arguing that all the power was in the hands of the Protestant aristocracy, who knew of the intention to endeavour to establish a separate republic and were doing everything in their power to prevent it. By the Insurrection Act the people were not allowed to purchase gunpowder and were obliged to register all arms in their possession, and if six magistrates declared a county

[1] Tone's "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 357 *et seq.*
[2] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 248.

in a state of insurrection, the Government might seize all arms and all persons who were out of their houses between 8 P.M. and 4 A.M. 1796. November.

The expedition was, nevertheless, prepared, and the command entrusted to Hoche, with whom O'Connor and Fitzgerald had an interview near the French frontier of Switzerland.[1] This information was not acquired until some years later, but the British Ministers received information of the expedition, besides the public rumours which must have reached their ears, by the letter of Lord Malmesbury dated November 13th, quoted above, which showed conclusively not only that the expedition was meditated, but that it was intended to start from Brest.[2] In consequence of this information the *Indefatigable*, commanded by Sir Edward Pellew, with three frigates and an armed lugger, were placed to watch the Brest fleet and communicate every movement to Vice-Admiral Colpoys at his rendezvous about eight leagues to the west of Ushant. This proved a rather exciting game of hide-and-seek, for he was chased several times by a line-of-battleship but still remained close enough in to discover the French fleet pass through the *goulet* from Brest road on November 15th, and anchor between Camaret and Bertheaume bays. Next day the fleet got under way and at 4 P.M. all the ships were steering for the passage du Raz, which dangerous route had been selected the better to conceal their movements from the British Admiral off Ushant, who was believed by the French to have a fleet of thirty sail, but this number greatly overstated his strength. Sir Edward now despatched one of his frigates, the *Revolutionnaire*, to the Admiral, and remained himself in the *Indefatigable* near the Bec du Raz until the French fleet appeared, and then managed to keep just ahead of them on their passage out, firing guns and sending up rockets which the French captains mistook for signals from their Admiral. This ingenious plan added to the confusion already apparent in the French fleet. On December 20th the *Indefatigable* arrived at Falmouth, and five days later Lord

[1] "Secret Service under Pitt," by W. J. Fitzgerald, chap. vi. pp. 46–47. Report of the Secret Committee in 1798. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 259–260.

[2] "Malmesbury Mission," see p. 38.

1796. November. Bridport got under way with his fleet, but a series of collisions, and the fact that one ship ran aground, delayed his start, and when at length he succeeded with eight battleships in arriving at St. Helen's, a sudden change of wind prevented the ships from Spithead joining him. It was, therefore, January 3rd before the fleet, consisting of fourteen sail of the line, six frigates, a fire ship, and a cutter, left the anchorage.[1]

1796. December. In the meantime, on December 22nd, the *Revolutionnaire* had joined Vice-Admiral Colpoys, but several of his ships having suffered in a gale, and being obliged to part company, the Admiral sailed for Spithead, where he arrived on the 31st with only six sail of the line. The result was that the bulk of the French fleet never saw an English ship at all from December 15th, when the expedition set sail, until their return. The fleet consisted of seventeen ships of the line, thirteen frigates, and a number of transports, carrying about 15,000 soldiers, in all forty-three vessels, under the command of Admiral Morand de Galles, while Hoche was General of the troops. Wolfe Tone and Chérin, the chief of the staff, were on board the *Indomitable*. From the moment when they set sail disaster seemed to pursue their every movement. In spite of the fact that the wind and weather were favourable, the faulty navigation of the French sailors caused several collisions, and wrecked the *Séduisant*, a ship of the line, upon a rock. Two days afterwards the General and the Admiral had become separated from the main body, which now numbered only eighteen sail, and although, after a dense fog had lifted, some of the missing vessels reappeared, the *Fraternité*, which carried De Galles, Hoche, and the whole treasury, was never seen again until the fleet returned to France. The command therefore devolved upon Admiral Bouvet and General Grouchy, who held on their way, and on the 22nd of December fifteen vessels reached Bantry Bay and anchored off Beer Island, while about twenty others failed to enter, but were in sight outside.[2] The first intimation of these alarming facts was sent to Dalrymple, who commanded the

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 21.

[2] Tone's "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 133 *et seq.* This account being that of an actual eyewitness is the best one extant.

English forces at Cork, from H.M.S. *Kangaroo* whose Commander had sighted the French fleet and sent his second lieutenant by land from Crookhaven with the news, he himself setting sail for England to inform the Admiralty. From other quarters the information was soon confirmed, and there was no doubt of the imminence of the danger, for if 15,000 good French soldiers had been landed it would have been impossible to have saved Cork since, at the most, only 8000 troops could have been concentrated before the enemy reached it.[1] 1796. December.

At this critical moment the elements came to the rescue, and on the night of the 22nd it blew a strong easterly gale, which not only prevented a landing but drove the fleet which lay outside in absolute confusion before the storm, those within the Bay even being in great danger. In spite of this, Grouchy, who, in the absence of Hoche, was now in commmad of the land forces, was in favour of landing, and took full responsibility for the step, even though he knew nothing of the plans which had been arranged by the Directory and had no money and few cannon. The anchors were therefore weighed on the afternoon of the 24th and the fleet stood for the land, with the object of sailing for Bantry, but the wind during the night rose to a full gale, so that no landing could be attempted. Tone now realised that the situation was desperate, for the English had probably collected a force on land and at any moment a fleet might appear from the sea, but he still advocated sailing to the mouth of the Shannon, and there landing troops for the purpose of attacking Limerick.[2] Meanwhile Bouvet, in spite of the earnest and angry protests of Grouchy, had ordered the fleet to put to sea and return to France, but the signals not being understood in the gale, the result was that the Admiral and General arrived safely, but alone, at Brest on January 1, 1797. The remainder of the fleet followed in detachments in the course of the next few days and reached France soon after, the last to arrive being the *Fraternité*, with De Galles and Hoche on board, which had been chased by an English frigate far from its intended course. The 1797. January.

[1] Lecky, vol. vii. pp. 258–259.

[2] Wolfe Tone's "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 148

1797. January. danger was now over and Ireland had been saved, but although the English fleet had, by a series of accidents, been prevented from meeting and engaging the French, and the latter had been defeated by the elements unaided, it was not just on the part of Grattan to accuse the Ministers of negligence in the Irish Parliament which met on January 16, 1797. It is true no fleet had been sent to protect the coast of Ireland, but a squadron had been placed to watch Brest, and a fleet was cruising off Ushant for the express purpose of engaging the French when they appeared. Grattan complained also, and with more justice, that Ireland had been denuded of regular troops, and that the defence of the country had been left in the hands of yeomanry and militia. He then argued strongly that the interests of Ireland demanded a speedy peace, and condemned the English Government for insisting on the surrender of Belgium in the peace negotiations, since the safety of Ireland was imperilled by a continuance of the war.[1]

Nevertheless, an amendment to the Address suggesting peace was supported by only six members. Had the expedition been successful in obtaining a landing it is difficult to estimate what would have been the result, but it is certain that England was both surprised and delighted to find that a strong reaction of loyalty had undoubtedly been aroused, and that the leaders of the United Irish had grossly overrated the disaffection of the Irish people. There is indeed no doubt that the great body of Catholics did not at this time wish to throw off the English rule, and that their sympathies were with the British and not the French.[2] At the time that Hoche was organising the French fleet at Brest, the French Government were equipping a number of felons and galley slaves whom they intended to land on the shores of England, merely for the purpose of working havoc and destruction. These individuals were called the Legion Noire, and were commanded by Colonel Tate, an American officer, who volunteered for this discreditable task.

[1] He concluded by moving an Amendment that this House could not concur that his Majesty's Ministers had "been serious in their negotiations with France, or that the naval force had been used with due vigilance or activity."

[2] See "Plowden's History of Ireland," vol., ii., part i., p. 591 *et seq.*

The object of the expedition was to burn Bristol, but owing to unfavourable weather it did not start until the February following the failure of the Irish invasion, when two frigates with a corvette and a lugger sailed from Brest and entered the Bristol Channel, carrying Colonel Tate and about 1200 men. 1797. January.

They first anchored at Ilfracombe, but did not attempt a landing there, and, after scuttling several merchantmen, sailed for Fishguard Bay in Pembrokeshire, where they disembarked. At once the Volunteers, Militia, and Yeomanry were up in arms under Lord Cawdor, and were soon joined by great numbers of the country people, armed with any weapon they could find. The local story is, that several women in their red cloaks were marched round and round a hill, thus giving the impression of a large army appearing towards the shore. This imposing spectacle appears to have greatly alarmed Colonel Tate, who then offered to surrender his men as prisoners of war, all of whom laid down their arms without striking a blow. Both the frigates were captured on their return to France, and so ended this contemptible enterprise, which is only interesting as being the single occasion on which hostile troops have landed in Great Britain since the Norman conquest.[1]

England was now assailed by a new peril from within, for a serious financial panic occurred in February 1797, but in order to appreciate its nature it is necessary to recall in a few words the history of the Bank of England. This institution was founded by Mr. William Paterson,[2] a Scotch gentleman, in 1694, who proposed and raised a loan of £1,200,000 for the public service, the Government giving the subscribers 8 per cent. interest, and £4000 a year as expenses of management, and granting them a charter for eleven years under the style of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England.[3] The Bank received exclusive privileges, inasmuch as no other banking company was allowed within the kingdom, but this was not confirmed in 1708 when the charter was renewed, and other banks were 1797. February.

[1] *Annual Register*, 1797, part i., p. 89.
[2] "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. xliv. p. 23.
[3] 5 & 6 W. and M., c. 20, ss. 16, 18, 19, 25, 31.

1797. February. permitted, but not allowed to issue notes if they consisted of an association of more than six persons.[1] The number of private banks in London in 1793 was fifty-six, and there were many in the country, but during this year no less than twenty-two of the latter became bankrupt.[2] At that time, as at the present, the ordinary business of the world was carried on by cheques, promissory notes, and bank notes, but it is a fundamental idea, which can never be shaken or controverted, that the stability of a bank depends upon the fact that it can produce gold in payment of its debts, whenever called upon to do so. Whenever, therefore, there is a panic, the depositors in banks hasten to draw out their deposits in gold, and if the bank cannot meet the demand it must close its doors, even if in possession of Government or other stock far exceeding its liabilities. To merchants and business men a bank note of a solvent institution is just as good money as gold, but to great numbers, in times of panic, it appears worthless, and they insist on having specie.

This is exactly what happened in 1797. A rumour gained credence that the Bank was short of gold, which indeed was true enough, as there had been large exportations of bullion in subsidies and loans to Foreign Powers, besides advances to Government, amounting to, with arrears of interest, ten and a half millions, and other payments in consequence of the war. Gold indeed was apparently so scarce that the price of it rose from £3, 7s. 10d. an ounce, as estimated in the coinage, to £4, 4s., but still the property owned by the Bank was absolutely good security, and its credit was therefore as sound as though it possessed cellars full of specie and bullion, instead of holding Government stock. The country people, not realising this, became alarmed, and withdrew their deposits from their banks in cash, and these in turn had to apply to the Bank of England for gold in exchange for their deposits, and thus the demand became so great that there was danger that in a few days it would have to stop payment.

[1] 7 A., c. 30, ss. 60, 66, 67, 70.

[2] See Lawson's "History of Banking," and Francis' "History of the Bank of England."

Pitt, therefore, resolved upon the simple though bold expedient of ordering the Bank to stop cash payments. 1797. February. There seems to have been a good deal of opposition to this measure in the Cabinet,[1] but Pitt was alarmed lest there should not be enough cash to pay the navy and ordnance, for he realised that very little could be saved from the public expenditure. It was therefore imperative to economise the specie in the Bank, but there is no doubt that this step was regarded in no other light than as a temporary expedient to tide over an awkward crisis. Even as such the fate of the assignats and mandats in France was sufficient reason to cause many to hesitate before substituting an unrestricted paper coinage for specie. It must also be remembered that none of the politicians, except perhaps Lord Grenville, at this date were versed in scientific political economy, and Ricardo was quite justified in writing a few years later, "It will scarcely be believed fifty years hence, that bank directors and ministers gravely contended in our times, both in Parliament and before Committees of Parliament, that the issue of notes by the Bank of England, unchecked by any power in the holder of such notes to demand in exchange either specie or bullion, had not, nor could have, any effect on the prices of commodities, bullion, or foreign exchanges."[2]

It is easy enough now to understand that the issue of paper money ought to have been limited to a certain amount, but this did not occur either to Ministers, bankers, or merchants. On February 26, 1797, therefore, a Minute of Council was drawn up, stating that it was the unanimous opinion of the Board that it was indispensably necessary for the public service that the Directors of the Bank of England should forbear issuing any cash in payment until the sense of Parliament could be taken on the subject, and it was ordered that a copy of the Minute should be transmitted to the Directors of the Bank of England, and that they should be required to conform thereto. On the next day

[1] "Life of Wilberforce," p. 167. "Samuel Thornton says that the Cabinet are very averse to take on themselves the responsibility of the measure." "No," said the Chancellor, "this will never do." At last Pitt said, "My Lords, shall I draw up the Minute?"

[2] M'Culloch, "Ricardo's Works," p. 214.

1797. February. Mr. Pitt presented this Minute to Parliament with a letter from the King "recommending this important subject to the immediate and serious attention of the House of Commons." He then proposed that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the outstanding engagements of the Bank, and of their means to meet them. He also intended to submit to Parliament that they should declare by law that the engagements of the Bank were secured by the public and that notes should be taken in payment instead of cash. Fox at once opposed, for although he did not object to make bank notes legal payments from individuals to the public, if the Minister meant to make bank notes legal payment from the public to the individual, "it was a measure which the House could not think of without seeing that it must shake the very foundation of public credit."[1] Mr. Sheridan then moved that no further exportation of specie or gold should take place for the use of the Emperor or any other foreign Power, until the sense of Parliament should have been taken on the subject, but Mr. Pitt answered that only a small proportion of the money sent abroad consisted of specie, and the order of the day was carried by 247 to 70.[2]

On the next day the motion for a committee was carried, although Mr. Fox opined that "every sanction given by the public to the credit of individuals, though for a time it may be attended with some advantage, will ultimately be found to be injurious and destructive, and Mr. Hobhouse thought "that bank paper would fall into as low a condition as ever assignats or mandats," and Mr. Hussey "had hoped never to have lived to see such a melancholy day as this for England."[3] Mr. Pitt then stated that "nothing was farther from his intention than that the measure should be permanent," and explained that the public creditor was often paid in notes instead of cash, and loans were often advanced without any expectation of being paid in specie, "nor could the Bank ever have it in contemplation that every quarterly dividend was to be paid in cash." The only member who referred at all to the probable effect of an unrestricted issue of bank notes was Lord Wycombe, who said, "The House should

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1519.
[2] Ibid., p. 1524. [3] Ibid., p. 1543.

reflect on the evils which such a measure as this would not fail to produce. It would lessen the value of the paper currency of the kingdom. He had seen the misery which that had produced in other parts of the world by raising most rapidly the price of all provisions, and bringing in a train of evils with which that House was unacquainted."[1] As we shall show later this prophecy was realised with terrible effects. Nevertheless it was necessary to raise the currency to carry on business, and the merchants in the city, having every confidence in the solvency of the Bank, met together and passed a resolution to the effect that they would accept and tender bank notes in any transactions they had to carry out, and this practical decision did far more to restore tranquillity to the public mind than any of the debates in Parliament. 1797. February.

Besides this method of restoring public credit a further measure was taken to counteract the inconvenience of a deficient supply of specie. A Bill was introduced on March 2nd, by Mr. Wilberforce Bird, to suspend the Acts of George III., 15 and 17, restraining the negotiation of promissory notes as far as they related to manufacturers and bankers not residing in the cities of London and Westminster and the borough of Southwark. This was quickly passed but did not come into operation until May 1st. The Opposition at this date seized any opportunity of attacking the Government, and Mr. Fox next proposed that a committee should inquire into the causes of the order of Council respecting the stoppage of cash payments, and wished to know if the necessity had arisen from an unprincipled system of public expenditure or "from the criminality of those at the head of affairs." Mr. Pitt replied and pointed out the inconvenience of having two committees investigating practically the same thing, and on a division the motion was rejected. The committee chosen consisted of Messrs. W. Hussey, Charles Grey, W. Plumer, T. Powys, T. Grenville, W. Wilberforce, J. Blackburn, T. B. Bramston, C. Bragge, W. W. Bird, J. Fane, H. Brown, and Sir J. Mitford, Sir John Scott, and Alderman Anderson.[2] Mr. Sheridan then moved that Mr. 1797. March.

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1541.
[2] Ibid., p. 1562.

1797. March. Fox should be added to the committee, but this was negatived by 140 to 53. At the same time a committee was also appointed by the Lords for the same purpose, consisting of Lords Chatham, Winchelsea, Graham, Hardwicke, Liverpool, Sydney, Grenville, Ossory, and De Dunstanville.[1] These committees were soon able to report that, on deducting the liabilities, there remained to the Bank a clear surplus of £3,800,000, exclusive of their debt from Government of nearly £12,000,000, and the public confidence was then fully restored.[2]

Nevertheless neither the Order in Council nor the action of the Directors of the Bank in obeying it was strictly legal, since nothing in their Charter warranted the interference of the King in Council with their business, nor had the Bank any right to refuse payment in gold even if ordered to do so by the Government.[3] A Bill was therefore brought in and became law in May to indemnify the Governor and Company of the Bank for any acts done by them in pursuance of the Order in Council, and further prohibited them from payment in cash except in sums under twenty shillings until June 24th, but on that date it was felt to be impossible to abolish the restriction, and cash payments were not resumed until 1819 under the Act of our greatest economist among politicians, Sir Robert, then Mr. Peel.[4]

1797. April. Owing to the increased currency another loan of £18,000,000 was raised without difficulty in April at £6, 17s. per cent., and several new taxes were created; one of a penny halfpenny was placed upon every newspaper and another

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxii. p. 1568.

[2] *Annual Register* 1797, p. 200.

[3] Ricardo in 1817 wrote, "In the present state of the law they (the Bank) have the power without any control whatever of increasing or reducing the circulation in any degree they may think proper; a power which should neither be intrusted to the State itself nor to anybody in it, as there can be no security for the uniformity in the value of the currency when its augmentation or diminution depends solely on the will of the issuers."—M'Culloch, "Ricardo's Works," p. 217.

[4] In 1819 the Governor of the Bank considered it was not practicable to resume cash payments, but admitted that if the issues were reduced the price of bullion would be affected. After two nights' debates the resolutions were nevertheless carried without a dissentient voice in committee, and a Bill was prepared ordering the resumption of cash payments.—C. S. Parker's "Sir Robert Peel," vol. i. p. 294.

increased the duty on advertisements, which latter might well be commended to the notice of any present day Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of this sum a million and a half was advanced to Ireland and three millions and a half to the Emperor of Germany, whom Pitt supposed to be resolute to maintain the war, but, as we shall soon relate, at this very time he was yielding, and in the middle of April signed the Preliminaries of Peace. 1797. April.

The Government had now lost the support of perhaps the greatest master of oratory who had ever adorned the debates of the House of Commons. Burke, broken in spirit, hopeless of recovery, and convinced that he had seen the end of all that was worth living for, was incurably ill, and after trying a final course of waters at Bath returned to Beaconsfield, where he expired on July 9th, and there lies buried. Although to us now his speeches and writings are marked by the grossest exaggerations, in which passion was deliberately developed at the expense of logical reasoning, yet they often served their purpose by rousing the lethargic to action and by giving to brutal excesses their appropriate condemnation. Burke was not a philosopher, coldly critical, appealing to men's reason, but a passionate leader playing upon the feelings of his followers, and carrying them with him by sheer strength of emotional declamation. He can therefore only have been really known and justly appreciated by his contemporaries, and any attempt to describe him is almost certain to give a false idea of his strength and his weakness. If we regard him as a man and not as an orator or statesman the task of estimating his character becomes easier, for there can be no doubt that he was actuated by the highest ideals of justice, rectitude, and morality, which he strove to inculcate not only by precept but also by example.

His support was of the greatest service to the Government, who were on most occasions and on most subjects opposed by those giants in debate, Messrs. Fox, Sheridan, and Grey. But on one subject Pitt and Fox were always in agreement, namely, the necessity to abolish the slave trade. Aware of the extraordinary difficulties in the way the Government voted against total abolition in 1791, and although it rescinded that vote in the following year, it had never carried out its resolu-

1797. April. tion, for the simple reason that no practical way of suppressing the trade was then apparent without causing far worse evils both for the planters and the slaves. On April 6, 1797, Mr. Ellis rose to move that his Majesty should direct the Governors of the plantations in the West Indies to recommend to their Councils and Assemblies "to adopt such measures as shall appear to them best calculated to obviate the causes which have hitherto impeded the natural increase of the negroes already in the Islands, gradually to diminish the necessity of the slave trade, and ultimately to lead to its complete termination."[1] The mover, as a West Indian proprietor, opined that "the plan proposed by the advocates for the Abolition cannot but be productive of severe injury to all persons connected with the Colonies," and for this reason he had tried to find another plan for the attainment of this object. He then pointed out that the decrease in numbers of the negroes was due to licentiousness and disease, and thought that a strict attention to the moral instruction of the young ones might ameliorate this state of affairs. Mr. Pitt said that the necessity of abolition of this abominable traffic had been recognised by that House and entered on its journals. The only question was at what time it ought to cease. He decidedly objected to the motion, because he considered it to be only a substitute for that abolition which the honour of the country and the safety of the islands so loudly, called for. Mr. Dundas supported the motion because he thought any attempt at abolition would be idle and nugatory without the consent of the colonial assemblies. Mr. Fox considered the motion "to be an indirect attempt to perpetuate the slave trade. The support given to it by Mr. Dundas was a sufficient proof to him of its object, as that gentleman had always opposed the abolition." On the division the motion was passed by 99 to 63 votes.[2]

The whole question of the slave trade was one on which every Englishman felt very strongly; the idea was revolting and abominable, and the very name slave was sufficient to enlist the sympathy of every member of Parliament; but there were many interests to consider and many practical difficulties to be overcome before a race, which was neither

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 269. [2] Ibid.

fitted to live in freedom, or to manage its own contracts as between employer and labourer, could be released from its unholy bond. Nor is it curious that both Pitt and Fox should have opposed this mild measure for attempting to better the condition of the negro, for neither for a moment imagined that both would have been dead for a quarter of a century before the final abolition took place, and both hoped to be able in a very short time to carry some total and absolute measure. 1797. April.

In Ireland it was now generally admitted that the most strenuous efforts should be made to put the country into a state of defence, and a motion of Sir Lawrence Parsons for increasing the yeomen by 50,000 was warmly supported by Grattan but rejected by the Government, "who appear to have greatly dreaded an increase of any purely Irish force."[1] Instead, a measure was passed authorising the Government to raise 10,000 additional troops, who were to serve only in the British Isles, and this was opposed by Grattan, who suggested that the force should never be removed from Ireland for service in England. In introducing the estimates on February 21st Pelham stated that the military expenses amounted to a million more than in the preceding year, and proposed to borrow £2,800,000, and to raise £305,000 additional taxes to pay the interest. This sum was to be obtained by increasing the duties on practically the same articles which had been taxed in England. On March 2nd the Bank of Ireland, by order of the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, followed the course taken by the Bank of England and suspended cash payments, and the credit of the Irish Bank being perfectly good, the merchants of Dublin showed the same common sense as had those of London and accepted the notes. About this time an interesting debate occurred in the Irish Parliament on the proposal of Vandaleur to impose a tax of two shillings in the pound on the estates of absentees. The argument in favour of this measure was that the new taxes would press heavily on the poor, and that the Irish landowners who lived in England 1797. February.

[1] Lecky, "Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 276. Plowden, vol. ii. part i. p. 596. "When Sir Lawrence Parsons complained of the opposition given by Government to every mode of defence proposed, Mr. Pelham thought proper to disclaim any suspicion on the part of Government against arming the people under the Yeomanry Act."

1797. paid no Irish duties on consumption and thus did not contribute to the country which defended their property. Grattan and Parsons supported the proposal but Castlereagh opposed it, and on a division it was thrown out by 122 to 49, although Camden wrote that the determination to impose the tax had spread and that he had much difficulty in withstanding the torrents of public opinion.[1]

Since this is the first mention of one who will play a very conspicuous part in our pages it is convenient here to give a short account of his life to this period. Robert Stewart, only surviving child of Lord Londonderry, was born on June 18, 1769—the same year in which his two illustrious contemporaries, Napoleon Bonaparte and the Duke of Wellington, first saw the light. His education took place at Armagh and at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he greatly distinguished himself in the examinations in Mathematics, Classics, Logic and Moral Philosophy. After leaving College he offered himself as a candidate to represent the County of Down in Parliament but was hotly opposed, and was returned only after the most arduous struggle and at a cost to Lord Londonderry of £60,000.[2] At this time, 1790, he was an advocate for a reform of the Irish House of Commons, but when the constituencies were enlarged by the admission of Roman Catholics to the right of voting, in 1793, he stated he would not vote for any more changes. At first he sided with the Opposition but when the Administration adopted severe measures against rebellion he warmly supported it. In 1797 the promotion of his father in the peerage conferred upon him the title of Viscount Castlereagh, and in the same year Lord Camden, whose sister was the second wife of Lord Londonderry, conferred upon him the office of Keeper of the Privy Seal in Ireland, but on the departure of Mr. Pelham he also acted as Chief Secretary in his place, and when that gentleman resigned in 1799, was definitely appointed to that post. He was therefore the mouthpiece of the Government during the time when it was necessary to quell the rebellion, and was consequently very unpopular among certain sections of the community.

1797. April to June.

[1] Lecky, "Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 277.
[2] "Memoirs of Lord Castlereagh," vol. i. p. 7.

In the summer of 1797 anarchy was rapidly spreading through the North of Ireland, the disturbances being organised by small societies of United Irishmen which acted independently of each other for the most part, and consisted of men who now aimed distinctly at a separate republic and hoped to attain it by armed rebellion with the aid of a French army. All those who had any grievance about tithes or rent, those who were actuated by the restlessness caused by great poverty, and those whose instincts were naturally criminal joined with the Whiteboys and Defenders, and the whole were organised by the United Irishmen into a force which might easily have proved most formidable but for the prompt action of the Government.[1] 1797. April to June.

Donegal and Roscommon were at first the worst counties, houses being robbed of arms and money, ricks burnt, corn destroyed and other outrages committed. Dr. Hamilton, one of the magistrates, was attacked at the house of a clergyman named Waller, and, after Mrs. Waller had been shot dead, was murdered, his body being hideously mangled. In Derry the stacks and houses of obnoxious persons were burnt and arms stolen with violence, and Lord Cavan, who commanded there, thinking that a rebellion was ready to break out, advised a reinforcement of troops and a proclamation of martial law. In Armagh similar disturbances were taking place, and some portions of it were proclaimed under the Insurrection Act.

M'Nally, one of the most useful of the spies, now warned the Government that from daily intercourse with "the leading men who informed the Catholic Committee in Dublin and the fraternity of reformers in Belfast," he knew that their real object was the establishment of a separate republic. The leaders of the United Irishmen were indeed not only attempting to win recruits to their cause, but also trying to prevent their followers from enlisting in the regiments which the Government were endeavouring to raise. Nevertheless,

[1] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 279. Plowden, vol. ii. part i. p. 634. On April 19th Lord Camden delivered a message to the House of Commons stating that on the information of some United Irishmen two committees in the town of Belfast had been arrested and their papers seized. Mr. Pelham then moved for a secret committee to examine them, and in spite of the opposition of Mr. Grattan the motion was carried.

1797. March many Catholics joined the colours for the purpose of obtaining arms which they intended to use against the uniform they were wearing. Grattan loyally desired that the country should arm to resist invasion, but Keogh, Braughall, Jackson, and other leaders worked hard to prevent any enlisting.[1]

Under these circumstances General Lake was ordered to disarm the districts in which outrages had taken place, and "if," Camden writes to Portland, "the urgency of the case demands a conduct beyond that which can be sanctioned by law, the General has orders from me not to suffer the cause of justice to be frustrated by the delicacy which might possibly have actuated the magistracy."[2] Lake accordingly issued a Proclamation on March 13th at Belfast inviting information about concealed arms, and ordering all persons who were not peace officers or soldiers to bring in their arms and ammunition.

This proclamation was clearly illegal, and the action of the Viceroy was most vigorously attacked in the Irish Parliament by Grattan, and in the English by Fox, both of whom argued that it was directed against the Protestant people of the north who had been most loyal since they rescued the country from the tyranny of Charles I. and James II.[3] The Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General replied that although the prerogative was extended beyond the letter of the law it was justified by that supreme law (*salus populi suprema lex*).[4] Most people now would agree with this action of the Government. It was not a case of a few agitators using high-sounding words in public meetings as had been the habit of the disaffected in England, but of deliberate arson, murder, and theft with violence which the civil power was unable to suppress. The Government were therefore far more justified in ordering martial law in Ireland than in instituting State trials for high treason in England. Gratton, on the other hand, advocated concessions, and feared that if Protestant Ulster were not conciliated nothing would save Ireland, or indeed the Empire, which was now assailed

[1] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 283.
[2] Ibid., p. 286.
[3] "Parliamentary History," xxxiii. p. 151.
[4] "Irish Parliamentary Debates," p. 144.

from within as well as from without. With this idea he moved an address to the King, praying for conciliatory measures,[1] but Pitt resolutely refused to interfere with the legislative power of the Irish Parliament which he stated was quite independent of England. The policy of coercion was therefore carried out ruthlessly and relentlessly without those concessions which at the same time show strength and desire to conciliate, and the question of emancipation of Catholics which Pitt had shown himself anxious to consider was now firmly resisted. Camden indeed threatened to resign if the Government conceded this point, and Portland at once assured him that both the King and the Ministers had not changed their opinion on the subject.[2] 1797. March.

The military now seized arms and ammunition in all directions, with the inevitable result that soon there was a general concealment, while in the province of Ulster matters progressed from bad to worse. Magistrates, military men, and country gentlemen were fearful of their lives, and had to be protected by the troops; no jury could be found to convict an United Irishman, and collisions were common between the soldiers and the people.[3] The military forces now consisted of 15,000 regulars, 18,000 militia, and 30,000 yeomanry, of whom more than half were cavalry, but an invasion being continually expected, and the country being exposed on all sides, Lake wrote that his forces were quite inadequate for the task set them. Unfortunately there were many cases where the military exceeded their duty, and undoubtedly many innocent people were cut down and had their houses burnt, but there is no evidence which could warrant the United Irishmen in accusing the Government of attempting "by a premeditated persecution" to drive the people into rebellion. But that the gaols were full of untried prisoners, 1797. April to July.

[1] Plowden states that the "northern unionists generally held back from this time," and attributes it to the guarded policy "peculiar to North Britain," vol. ii. part ii. p. 643.

[2] Lecky, vol. vii. p. 293.

[3] Plowden, vol. ii. part i. p. 640. "Much mischief was produced in Ireland by the peoples not being convinced of the necessity of subjecting the law to the sword, and their discontent increased with every instance in which the law counteracted the efforts of the Government to harass and oppress them." Musgrave thinks that most of the Presbyterians separated from the Papists in 1797. "Memoir," p. 194.

and that many were sent to the Fleet without trial, was undoubtedly true.

1797. January. Meanwhile, General Wolfe Tone had not been idle in France, where he arrived safely, after the ill-fated expedition in Ireland, on January 1, 1797. His diary at this time is very interesting reading, and well shows the exceedingly complex character of the great Irish patriot and rebel. His love for his wife is illustrated by the most extravagant language: "The transports of joy I felt at the news of her arrival were most dreadfully corrected by the account she gave me of her health, which threw me into the most terrible alarms."[1] At the end of January he applied for leave to visit her and their children at Hamburg, and had an interview with Hoche in which the General informed him that "the Affair" was only suspended for lack of funds, and continued, "but be assured the moment the enterprise is resumed that I will return with the first *patrouille* which embarks."[2]

Tone was now again full of hopes, and wrote, "If the Spaniards and the Directory act with spirit and decision all may yet do well, and Ireland be independent." Speaking of the French Press he opines that "In England there is not one of those scoundrelly journalists but would be sent to Newgate for two years for one-fiftieth part of the libels which are published day after day in Paris with the most perfect impunity; yet the rascals cry out that they are enslaved, and call the Directory tyrants and oppressors, whereas the proof that the most unbounded liberty, or, to speak more properly, the most outrageous license exists in France, is, that such audacious libels are published, and that the authors are not sent instantly to the galleys."[3]

1797. June. Immediately on the receipt of information the English Government acted, and hearing that plotting was still proceeding between the French and the discontented in Ireland, nearly fifty persons were arrested near Belfast in May, one of them being a dissenting-clergyman, Sinclair Kilburne. Tone was now again despondent, and wrote in June that he did not believe the Irish people "are prepared for a serious and

[1] "Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone," by his Son, vol. ii. p. 159.
[2] Ibid., p. 162.
[3] Ibid., p. 202.

general insurrection, and in short (why should I conceal the fact?) I do not believe they have the spirit."[1] In the middle of this month Lewines was sent by the Executive Committee of the United Irishmen to apply to France, Holland, and Spain for assistance in troops, arms, and money, to enable them to take the field and assert their liberty, and he stated that the organisation of the people was complete, and that nothing was wanting but the *point d'appui*. 1797. June.

The Irish executive now resolved to send another messenger to France, and chose Dr. M'Nevin, a Catholic physician and an ardent member of the society. At the end of June he left for Hamburg, and on his arrival drew up for the French Directory a "Memoir" on the State of Ireland, with instructions as to the best method of invading it. He recommended Lough Swilly as the best place of landing on the north, and Oyster Haven on the south, but pointed out that it was only in the north and north-west of the island that the French could expect any efficacious help from the Irish. In Ulster he stated there were 150,000 men enrolled, most of whom could become useful soldiers, but arms were greatly wanted. He considered that now the Catholic priests had embraced Republican principles, and that "they have persuaded the people to take the oath (of allegiance) imposed on them by force, without in any respect renouncing their principles and their projects."[2]

The Government were informed by M'Nally of the mission of Lewines in May, and of that of M'Nevin in July, and also became acquainted with the correspondence of Lord Edward Fitzgerald through a new informer, one Samuel Turner, LL.D., a barrister who appeared, wrapped in the orthodox cloak of the stage conspirator,[3] to Lord Downshire on October 8, 1797. He was known usually as "Lord Downshire's friend," and had many other *aliases* of which Richardson appears to be the most usual, but his identity has now been fully established, chiefly by Mr. Fitzpatrick.[4] 1797. July.

[1] "Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone," by his Son, vol. ii. p. 211. This was written after he had read in the *Journal General* of the arrests near Belfast, and that Pelham intended to submit their papers to a Secret Committee of the House of Commons.

[2] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 295–301.

[3] Froude's "English in Ireland."

[4] "Secret Service under Pitt," p. 8

1797. July. By this time the preparations in the Dutch ports were almost completed, and Tone and Lewines proceeded to the Hague. The French Minister of Marines now asked for two months' grace to make the expedition on a grand scale, but Tone did his best to persuade Hoche to start as soon as possible, adding that 5000 men sent now would be far better than 25,000 in three months, when the mutiny which was raging in the English fleet would be quelled. Hoche agreed with Tone, but unfortunately for them there was now a hitch in the arrangements, for the French Government demanded that 5000 of the invading force should be French, and that General Hoche should be in command of the whole. To this the Dutch would not agree since they had had the whole expense and wished to have the glory, and so Hoche returned to the army of the Sambre and the Meuse, while Wolfe Tone embarked on board the flag-ship at the Texel.[1] But the elements again seemed determined to prevent an invasion, the Dutch fleet being kept in harbour by foul winds which caused Tone, chafing at the delay, to write impatiently in his diary on July 26th, "I am to-day eighteen days aboard, and we have not had eighteen minutes of fair wind."[2] The prospects did not improve with time, and towards the middle of August Admiral de Winter summoned him to a conference, and pointed out that Admiral Duncan, who was blockading the harbour, had now increased his fleet to seventeen sail of the line, and that since the Dutch troops had consumed most of the provisions on board, the expedition to Ireland would have to be abandoned. Tone, bitterly disappointed, left the Texel to join Hoche, but here another great grief fell upon him, for the General, who was in declining health, died in a fortnight of acute consumption. With the death of Hoche

[1] Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, tome ix. p. 197.

[2] Tone's "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 421. This proves that Admiral Duncan's scheme of signalling, which is related in James' "Naval History," and by others, was not the real cause of the non-appearance of the Dutch. Towards the end of May Duncan had only two ships, the rest having joined the mutineers, "He nevertheless proceeded to his station off the Texel, in which harbour lay at anchor the Dutch fleet of fifteen sail of the line under the command of Admiral de Winter. In order to detain the latter in port until a reinforcement should arrive Admiral Duncan caused repeated signals to be made, as if to the main body of the fleet in the offing. This stratagem, it was supposed, had the desired effect." James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 66.

the armament at Brest, destined for another attempt on Ireland, was only slowly pursued; but the French Directory exerted its influence over the Dutch Government and caused orders to be given to Admiral de Winter to sally forth and give battle to the English.[1] 1797. July.

[1] "Memoirs of Tone," vol. ii. p. 256.

CHAPTER V

Bonaparte invades the Papal States—Preliminaries of Leoben—Sir William Hamilton on state of affairs at Naples—Defeat of Spanish fleet at St. Vincent—Mutiny in fleet at Spithead—Debate on the Naval Estimates—Mutiny at the Nore—Defeat of Dutch fleet at Camperdown—Nelson at Cadiz and Teneriffe—Further overtures for peace with France—Cold reception by the French—Directory overthrown by Bonaparte—Failure of negotiations—Peace of Campo Formio—French designs on Naples—State of Ireland—Grattan and others retire from political life—Trial of William Orr—Lord Moira in House of Lords—Budget of 1797—Thanksgiving for naval victories.

1797. EARLY in 1797 Bonaparte again invaded the Papal States, and the Pope, recognising the uselessness of resistance, agreed to give up Bologna, Ferrara, and the Romagna in return for a certain sum of money.[1] The next victim was to be Venice, whose ultimate fate the map maker of Europe had not yet decided, but he intended to prepare it for any sacrifice which events might necessitate. The Senate were therefore offered a French alliance and, when this was refused, the towns of Bergamo and Brescia were occupied by the troops of the conqueror, with the usual result that in a short time the inhabitants were induced to revolt and to throw off all connection with the Venetian Government.

1797. April. Austria was now beaten in Italy, and its army driven to within eighty miles of Vienna, when at Leoben, on April 7th, its commander asked for an armistice, and negotiations for peace commenced. On the 18th the preliminaries were signed, by which, in return for the Netherlands, Bonaparte secretly agreed to hand over to Austria the whole of the mainland of Venice east of the Oglio, and the Adriatic provinces of Istria and Dalmatia. During these negotiations a serious riot occurred at Verona, in which some hundreds of French soldiers perished by popular violence. Bonaparte at once seized the opportunity to demand, with effusive protestations of friendship and goodwill, that a popular

[1] Thiers, tome ix. p. 53.

Government should be established in Venice in place of the oligarchy who had shown they could not maintain order. The Senate were compelled to agree, and, after admitting a French garrison into Venice, the Grand Council voted its own dissolution on May 12th, and concluded peace.[1] In this manner did the French General give to the Venetians a fictitious liberty with the one hand while he bargained away their territory to Austria with the other. Indefatigable and insatiable he next seized the Ionian Islands, and then agreed with the Austrian envoy, De Galle, to give Austria the whole of Venice upon the mainland, as well as the city itself, in return for the frontier of the Rhine. 1797. April.

Meanwhile Sir William Hamilton was sending home alarming reports of the condition of Naples. The army, he stated, was much reduced by death and desertion, and there was great discontent in the kingdom. The Court was by no means secure, and if the rapid progress of the French army increased, they would soon give the law to the whole of Italy. The aggrandisement of the Duke of Parma, he considered, was the temptation that induced the Court of Spain to join the French Republic. "Now that the King's fleet had left the Mediterranean, and a squadron has come out of Toulon, in case of any accident here, it would be difficult to escape from Naples, either by land or sea."[2]

But if Bonaparte were doing as he pleased on land, the British fleet was enjoying the same privilege on the sea, and on February 14, 1797, gained a considerable victory over the Spanish, off St. Vincent. Sir John Jervis, the Admiral, was on the *Victory*, and Nelson distinguished himself in command of the *Captain*, capturing the *San Nicolas* and the *San Josef*, for which service he was created a Rear-Admiral. The Spanish Fleet consisted of twenty-five sail of the line under Admiral Cordova, to which the English could oppose only fifteen. At the beginning of the engagement Nelson, and Captain Troubridge of the *Culloden*, engaged six of the enemy's ships unsupported for about an hour, until the *Blenheim* came up and gave them a respite. Captain Collingwood on the *Excellent* also gave a good 1797. February.

[1] Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, tome ix. p. 85.

[2] From Sir William Hamilton, June 6, 1797. F. O. Records, Sicily, 10.

1797. February. account of himself, capturing first the *San Pedro* and then giving a tremendous fire to the *San Nicolas* when within ten feet of her. In the end the greater part of the Spanish fleet was seriously disabled, and forced to retire during the night to Cadiz Bay.[1] This was the second of the series of victories which were ultimately to teach the French that even with the assistance of the Spanish and Dutch they could not successfully encounter the British on the sea. In face of the enemy the British tars were indeed rapidly building up the reputation which the country has since enjoyed, but there was serious discontent in the navy at home. Lord Howe, being now on shore, several complaining letters were sent from the seamen at Portsmouth to Lord Bridport, his successor in command of the Channel Fleet. The fact that most of these letters were unsigned, and nearly all written by the same hand, led to the idea that the whole was the plot of some agitator, and little notice was taken. Nevertheless, Lord Hugh Seymour was directed to ascertain whether any discontent existed in the fleet, but he does not seem to have discovered it.[2]

1797. April. At length the storm burst. On April 15th, Lord Bridport, who was at Spithead, gave the signal to prepare for sea, but the seamen, instead of obeying, ran up the shrouds and gave three cheers, which was evidently the signal for rebellion. The officers at once used their utmost endeavours to persuade the men to return to duty but without avail, and, on the next day, each ship's company appointed two of their number to act as delegates, and these held a meeting in the flag-officer's cabin of the *Queen Charlotte*. On the 18th the thirty-two delegates drew up and signed two petitions, one to Parliament, the other to the Admiralty. The former stated that the price of all articles necessary for subsistence had increased at least 30 per cent. since the reign of Charles II., whereas the pay of the seamen had remained constant, and that the pensions of Chelsea had been augmented to £13 per annum, but those at Greenwich still

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 34, *et seq.* Nicolas' "Nelson's Despatches," vol. ii. p. 344 *et seq.*

[2] *Annual Register*, 1797, part i. p. 207. James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 23.

remained at £7. The petition to the Admiralty stated their readiness to be true to their character as Englishmen and defenders of their country, but demanded an increase of pay and rations and the continuance of pay to wounded seamen until they were cured and discharged. 1797. April.

The Board of Admiralty, consisting of the First Lord, Earl Spencer, Lord Arden, and Admiral Young, at once proceeded to Portsmouth and authorised Lord Bridport to inform the ships' companies that they would recommend the King to propose to Parliament an augmentation of pay, and would agree to all their other requests if the seamen returned to duty within twenty-four hours. On the 21st Admirals Gardner, Colpoys, and Poole went on board the *Royal Charlotte* in order to confer with the delegates, who then stated that the crews would agree to nothing unless it was guaranteed by Parliament and the King's proclamation.

Admiral Gardner was so irritated by this demand that he seized one of the delegates by the collar and swore he would have them all hanged with every fifth man in the fleet. This unfortunate occurrence infuriated the representatives of the men, and those from the *Royal George* returned to their ship at once, hoisted the red flag, and loaded the guns. Next day the crews wrote two letters, one to the Admiralty and the other to Lord Bridport, in which they styled him "Father and friend," and assured him of their respect and attachment. This induced him to return to his ship, hoist his flag, and to issue an address to the crew assuring them he had brought a redress of their grievances and a pardon from the King for what had passed. The crews then contentedly returned to their duty.

A fortnight after, on May 7th, a fresh mutiny broke out, caused by the seamen distrusting the promises made by the Government, but this was speedily quelled by the presence and exhortations of Lord Howe, who reminded them of their service and victories under his flag; and shortly after the seamen of Plymouth were also induced to submit.[1] 1797. May.

The naval estimates were laid before Parliament on May 8th, and Pitt moved for a total of £436,000 for additional

[1] *Annual Register*, 1797, p. 211. James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 23 *et seq.*

1797. May. pay and allowance to the seamen and marines in the navy. Fox agreed, but cavilled at the Ministry for allowing a fortnight to pass before applying for the interference of Parliament. Sheridan and Whitbread also proceeded in the same strain, but Pitt answered that the seamen's demands had been submitted to the King in Council, and that the estimates had been made out as quickly as the observance of the usual forms allowed.[1] Sheridan next proposed that a joint committee of both Houses should be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, but Pitt objected to this, not only on the ground that it was an innovation in the discipline of the navy, but that it was also unconstitutional. The Bill was then rapidly passed through its various stages and received the Royal Assent.

Just as the country was congratulating itself that all was satisfactorily settled, a fresh mutiny broke out at the Nore on May 22nd. This was partly the work of the French Government, who, hoping by this means to paralyse Great Britain's right arm, had permitted De la Croix to send over an emissary named Duckett to work upon the feelings of the men.[2] But the ringleader was one Richard Parker, who seems to have had an iron grip on the men, and compelled them to obey him absolutely. The crews easily took possession of their ships, and elected delegates to preside over them, and to draw up a statement of their demands to present to the Admiralty, which proved, however, altogether too exorbitant to be granted.

1797. June. On the 6th of June the mutinous fleet at the Nore was joined by the *Agamemnon*, *Leopard*, *Ardent*, and *Isis*, men-of-war which had deserted from Admiral Duncan's fleet then stationed off the Texel watching the Dutch who were still in harbour. Admiral Buckner, the commander at the Nore, nevertheless remained firm, and informed the seamen that their demands could not be granted, to which Parker replied, that they would keep possession of the fleet until the Lords of the Admiralty had repaired to the Nore and redressed their grievances. Accordingly Lords Spencer and Arden and

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 477.

[2] "Secret Service under Pitt," by Fitzpatrick, p. 114. Wolfe Tone thoroughly distrusted Duckett, whom he thought was a spy and a scoundrel. See "Memoirs," vol i. p. 76 *et seq.*

Admiral Young hastened to Sheerness and had a conference with Parker and the other delegates, but their behaviour was so audacious that nothing was arranged, although it was elicited that the principle cause of complaint was the unequal distribution of prize money. 1797. June.

The negotiations having failed all the buoys were next removed from the mouth of the Thames and the neighbouring coasts, which abound in shoals, so that should any ship attempt to sail it would probably run aground; preparations were also made by the forts at Sheerness to resist any attack which might be made upon them by the ships. To this step the mutineers retaliated by blockading the Thames, the ships who were suspected of wavering in the cause being compelled to take their station in the midst of the others; but by this time they had lost all the sympathy which had been felt for their fellow-seamen during the mutiny on the south coast, and their proceedings were strongly reprobated both by the public and by the fleets at Plymouth and Portsmouth, where contentment and gratitude were felt for the concessions. The delegates next sent Lord Northesk, the commander of the *Montague*, who had been kept a prisoner on his ship, to the King to demand an immediate acquiescence in their requests, failing which they threatened to put to sea. No answer being returned to this, shortly afterwards the delegates quarrelled among themselves and then gradually all returned to duty. Richard Parker was tried and executed, while others were whipped or punished in other ways.[1]

The British North Sea fleet had been reduced to three ships in May, but nevertheless Admiral Duncan continued at his station off the Texel in order to keep the Dutch fleet of fifteen sail of the line in the harbour. This stratagem was supposed to have had the desired effect, and at length, about the middle of June, several battleships in detached parties joined the British Admiral.[2] But after being at sea for eighteen weeks the *Venerable* was short of stores, and other of the ships also requiring provisions the Admiral put into Yarmouth Roads on October 3rd, leaving a small squadron of October.

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 64. "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 813. Pitt brought in a Bill on June 3rd making it felony to communicate with the ships in a state of mutiny.

[2] See above, p. 88.

1797. October. observation off the Dutch Coast. Hither on the 9th an armed lugger appeared with the signal flying for an enemy, which cheerful sight caused Duncan at once to put to sea with eleven sail of the line, but being joined by others in the course of the next two days, his fleet then totalled sixteen gun ships, two frigates, a sloop, four cutters and a lugger.[1] On the 11th was sighted the Dutch fleet, under Admiral de Winter, consisting of fifteen gun ships, four frigates and six corvettes, which had at length quitted the Texel on the 8th, and were now cruising near Camperdown. At 11.30 the fleets were distant about five miles, and shortly after Admiral Duncan signalled that he should pass through the enemy's line and engage him to leeward, but this signal was not generally seen owing to the haze. At about 12.30 Vice-Admiral Onslow in the *Monarch* cut through the Dutch line between the *Jupiter* and the *Haerlen*, pouring a broadside into each. Then she luffed up close alongside the *Jupiter* and became warmly engaged with three of the enemy's ships. The remaining vessels of the larboard division followed into action and fought with such energy, especially the *Monmouth* and *Russell*, that many of the Dutch soon surrendered, but almost the last to strike her colours was the ship first attacked, the *Jupiter*.

Meanwhile the *Venerable*, failing in her attempt to pass astern of the *Vryheid*, because the *States General* had closed the interval, ran under the stern of the latter, and poured into her a broadside. The action now became general. The *Brutus*, *Leyden*, and *Mars*, Dutch ships, next pressed the *Venerable* hard, and obliged her to haul off; but the *Triumph*, who had already compelled the *Wassenaer* to strike her colours, approached to give the *Vryheid* the *coup de grâce*, and at length this gallantly fought vessel, having lost her three masts, dropped out of the line and struck, and when it became apparent that the Admiral's ship was taken the action ceased. In this great victory nine battleships and two frigates were captured, but the other seven ships of the fleet were allowed to escape unpursued, owing to the fact that night was falling, and that as the whole of the fighting ships were only a few miles from shore and in shoal

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 68.

water, the Admiral would not run the risk of following them. The British loss amounted to 228 killed and 812 wounded, and the Dutch was very much heavier.[1] 1797. October.

In June Nelson blockaded Cadiz, and the Spaniards after some days endeavoured to break through, sending out a great number of mortars and gun-boats, but these were at once vigorously attacked and driven back to the harbour. On July 1st he proceeded to the island of Teneriffe and attacked Santa Cruz, but his force was insufficient, and after losing heavily he was compelled to re-embark. It was here the future hero of Trafalgar lost his right arm.[2] England was now mistress of the high seas, but the preliminaries of Leoben left her without a single ally on the Continent except Portugal. Russia had however sent a courier from St. Petersburg with very full instructions from the Emperor Paul, who had succeeded to the throne on the death of Catherine on November 17, 1796, to interpose his mediation between the belligerent powers if called upon to do so.[3] 1797. July.

The conditions were therefore very different to those of the previous year; Austria was now crushed and Northern Italy lay at the feet of the conqueror. The Netherlands, for which England had been exerting herself to the utmost, were now made over to France with the consent of Austria. Naples was in dire distress, and although little was to be feared from the Spanish navy, yet the French fleet had succeeded in reaching Ireland, and had it not been for the gales would undoubtedly have landed a force considerable enough to create great trouble. The mutiny in the fleet at Spithead, and the condition of the finances, also caused Pitt to take a very despondent view of the situation, and he was now prepared to negotiate a peace even if it were necessary to make great sacrifices. The attitude of the King was now quite different, for whereas in the previous year he acquiesced cheerfully in negotiations which he did not think would be successful, now that he saw Pitt was in earnest, he at first opposed, stating that the country had taken "every

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 72.

[2] Laughton's "Life of Nelson," vol. i. p. 117. Nicolas' "Despatches and Letters," vol. ii. p. 422 *et seq.*

[3] Elgin to Grenville, July 15, 1797. F. O. Records, Prussia, 45.

1797. July. humiliating step for seeking peace, the warmest advocate for that object could suggest." But understanding that Pitt was bent upon treating, he reluctantly withdrew his opposition. Lord Grenville, also, was not in favour of seeking peace, but it is doubtful for what reason or object he wished to continue the war. It was, however, extremely foolish of the Government to choose Lord Malmesbury to conduct the negotiations, for they must have known that the French distrusted him. This indeed was clearly shown when overtures were made to De la Croix, who only accepted them in very ungracious terms. Further, Lille, and not Paris was appointed as the place of meeting, and De la Croix did not negotiate himself, but sent three French Ministers, Le Tourneur, who had recently been a member of the Directory, the Admiral Pleville le Peley, and Maret. The first meeting took place on July 6th, when it became apparent that France intended to continue the war. The conditions were indeed very different from those of the previous year. In 1796 England demanded the return of the Netherlands as the price of peace; in 1797 the French plenipotentiaries stated that their secret treaties with Spain and Batavia required that neither of those countries should lose any territory, and that therefore England would have to return all she had taken.[1] To this the English Government instructed Malmesbury to say that it was absurd to hold that treaties with their allies should preclude a treaty with England since they could cancel the former at any moment. He was therefore to demand that the enemy should state at once, plainly, the whole of what they had to ask.[2] Nevertheless, although the negotiations were not proceeding at all smoothly, Malmesbury did not waste his time, and sent home a description of the mode of taxation employed, with an account of the fall in value of the assignats, and gave it as his opinion that there was a disposition among Pichegru's troops to attack and overthrow the Government. He was always optimistic, and wrote on August 6th, "In the present state of Parties they seem to have forgotten that they have a foreign enemy, and

[1] July 16th. F. O. Records, France, 50. "Malmesbury Diaries," vol. iii. p. 405.

[2] July 20, 1797. F. O. Records, France, 50. "Diaries," vol. iii. p. 412.

both from this reason and from the extreme difficulty of raising supplies to any extent, I think for the moment we need be under no apprehension of hostile attack in any part of the world."[1] 1797. July.

Pitt was now prepared to acknowledge Belgium as a French possession, all the French conquests in Italy and Germany, and to give back all the English possessions which had been taken during the war except the Cape of Good Hope and Trinidad, but still France was not satisfied. Indeed she offered a decided rebuff to England by signing a separate treaty with Portugal against the express stipulation of the English treaty of 1703, but the Court of Lisbon, on the demand of their old ally, declined to ratify it. At one time the prospect seemed slightly to improve; De la Croix, who was personally hostile to Malmesbury, was replaced as Minister for Foreign Affairs by Talleyrand, and Admiral Pleville le Peley became Minister of Marine, thus reducing the French plenipotentiaries to two, of whom Maret seemed to be in favour of peace. Indeed Malmesbury was on the most friendly terms with the negotiators, but still the English doubted the sincerity of the overtures that were made by the Directory, just as the French doubted those of the previous year. 1797. August.

Everything indeed was in favour of the Republic; the negotiations were successfully proceeding with the Emperor for a definitive peace, and no interference was to be expected from the rest of Europe except Portugal; in spite of the value of assignats, the nation was far more wealthy and prosperous than ever before, and if indiscipline was occasionally met with in the army when in France, it never appeared in the face of the enemy.

Lord Grenville soon realised that the negotiations were hopeless, and, as was not unusual with him at this time, assumed so haughty a tone in one of his despatches that Malmesbury refused to submit it. Pitt still hoped for peace in spite of the attempted treaty with Portugal, but these hopes were dashed to the ground by the *coup d'état* of September 4th, when the Triumvirate of the Directory, acting upon the advice of General Augereau, whom Bonaparte had 1797. September.

[1] August 6, 1797. F. O. Records, France, 50. Not in the "Diaries."

1797. September. sent to Paris, ordered a great body of troops into Paris, dispersed the two legislative Councils and arrested a multitude of members who were opposed to them.[1] Carnot escaped to Geneva, but Barthélemy and forty-two members of one legislative Council and eleven of the other with nearly two hundred priests and many editors of journals were seized and condemned to perpetual banishment to Cayenne or Guiana.

It was the opinion of Malmesbury and Canning, who was now Pitt's great friend and confidant, and of Maret and Talleyrand, that if this revolution had not taken place the majority of the Directory would have been forced by public opinion and the legislative Councils to make peace.[2] The new Government, however, recalled Maret and Le Tourneur from Lille, and peremptorily demanded as a preliminary to further negotiations whether Malmesbury had power to consent to a general restitution of every possession remaining in his Majesty's hands, not only those belonging to the French but to their allies also. This preposterous demand being answered in the negative, he was ordered to leave France within twenty-four hours, and the mission terminated on September 17th. Thus ended the second attempt to make peace, this time indeed due to French avarice and an insolent sense of power experienced by those who had acquired a position for which they were unfitted by their training and culture.[3]

1797. October. Bonaparte, elated by the success with which he had overthrown Carnot and Barthélemy, and already feeling himself

[1] Malmesbury seems to have anticipated some such occurrence. On August 6th he writes, "They (the soldiers) conduct themselves not as an army marching quietly through its own country, but as if they came for hostile purposes. Violent, but most unconstitutional declarations in support of the Directorial authority have been made by divisions of Bonaparte's army; and it is evident that the three Directors have endeavoured to form a strong party amongst the soldiers, and expect effectual support from them."—"Diaries," vol. iii. p. 452.

[2] "The violent revolution which has taken place at Paris has overset all our hopes and defeated all our reasonings. I consider it as the most unlucky event that could have happened. We were certainly very near attaining the great object of our wishes, and I fear we are now more driven out to sea again than ever."—Malmesbury to Pitt, September 9th, "Diaries," vol. iii. p. 541.

[3] "Le Directoire, se flattant d'avoir sous peu la paix avec l'Autriche, ou du moins de la lui imposer par un mouvement de nos armées, avait l'espoir d'être bientôt déliveré de ses ennemis du continent et de pouvoir tourner toutes ses forces contre l'Angleterre."—Thiers, tome ix. p. 313.

a dictator, now determined to conclude a peace with Austria on his own terms, and on October 17th signed the final treaty of Campo Formio which gave to France the frontier of the Rhine, and to Austria, Venice, and the Venetian territory beyond the Adige. The Emperor, strongly against the advice of Thugut, drew up the ratification, and the Directory, although condemning the cession of Venice, also ratified it. 1797. October.

Prussia stood aloof in spite of the fact that, after the negotiations at Lille had ended, the French Government, not content with crushing its foes, determined to make them coerce each other, and demanded that the Prussian Court should enter into "a formal connection with France, and to grant its co-operation towards forcing Austria to accept such terms of peace as may suit the interests of the two countries."[1]

The Russian Emperor did nothing but remonstrated and directed his Ambassador to suspend all further transactions with the French Government, and to inform the French Minister at Berlin that he was firmly attached to his allies, and that since by the treaty of Teschen, Russia as well as France had bound themselves to guarantee the integrity of the German Empire, on these principles he would consider as his enemy every power which concurred in the dismemberment of Germany.[2] Such a statement was futile, for Bonaparte had no more respect for treaties between nations than for the feelings of individuals. The new French Government indeed hastened to promise to Prussia the Bishopric of Munster, in return for the Duchies of Cleve and Guelders, at the same moment that it promised Austria that Prussia should receive no extension whatever, while the threat of the Russian Emperor was received with silent contempt.

England also was treated with but little more respect, for the Prussian Court, itself under the heel of the French, plucked up courage to demand that King George should recognise the principle that free ships made free goods, but this the English Government "immediately and unequivo- 1797. December.

[1] Elgin to Grenville, October 6, 1797. F. O. Records, Prussia, 45.
[2] Ibid., October 9, 1797. F. O. Records, Prussia, 45.

1797. December. cally" rejected.[1] Everywhere the cause of the allies was unfortunate, and everywhere the unscrupulous policy of Bonaparte, formed of a mixture of violence and oily deceit, was bearing fruit. Austria being subdued, the King of the Sicilies was the next monarch whom he endeavoured to seduce. Hamilton wrote from Naples on December 19, 1797, stating that the French had offered to cede all the Venetian islands except Corfu to his Sicilian Majesty, but that he would not accept any unless he had them all. "The French are desirous of having" (there is a blank here in the deciphering) "of Tuscany, but this Court does not seem to be inclined to give it to them, the remarkable attention shown here of late to the French Minister and the Spanish Chargé d'affaires, indicates a preservation of good understanding between the Court of Madrid, the Court of Naples and the French Republic, and that this Court will be at length induced to join Spain and France in their great object of obstructing the trade of Great Britain on the Seas. This country is ripe for revolution."[2]

After the failure of the negotiations at Lille the country understood that it was necessary to continue the war with even increased vigour, and Fox, Grey, and Sheridan, now recognising that the utmost had been done for peace, adopted the plan of absenting themselves from the debates, which conduct was bitterly censured in the House of Commons. Another inveterate opponent of the Government, George Tierney, a barrister and member for Colchester, took their place, and frankly and openly stated that he intended to vote against every act of the administration.[3] As this was his intention, his criticisms of Pitt's budgets are perforce entirely deficient in judicial analysis, but sparkle with ironical wit and satire.

1797. February to March. Meanwhile Ireland had been spared a second attempted invasion, but the condition of that unhappy country was terrible in the extreme. General Lake complained bitterly

[1] To Lord Elgin, November 1797. F. O. Records, Prussia, 46.

[2] From Sir William Hamilton. F. O. Records, Sicily, 10.

[3] On November 7th he said "he was determined to give his negative not only to this (supply vote), but to every other act of the present administration. He assured the House that he had a general retainer for the whole session." "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 963.

that he was overburdened with prisoners whom no jury would convict, and it was not considered safe to send any more to the fleet since it had been in mutiny. Indeed Mr. Lecky has found some evidence that the mutiny was not unconnected with the Ulster rebels,[1] and that a French agent, Duckett, was sent to the Nore by De la Croix, has been already narrated. The anarchy in the North was rapidly assuming the character of a civil war between the Orangemen—who from at first being merely the lawless section of the poorer class of Protestants had now become a strong body led by the country gentlemen of Ulster—and the United Irishmen, who sought to combine with themselves both the Roman Catholics and the Protestant dissenters. The Orange Society, on the other hand, strongly opposed the admission of Roman Catholics to Parliament and, ranging itself on the side of the Government, professed to be adverse to all outrage and persecution.[2] 1797. February to March.

Brigadier General Knox, a man who had great influence in the North, and a thorough knowledge of its social and political condition, now advised the Government to give permission to the Orangemen to enroll themselves in the district corps, and to allow their meetings. This policy was pursued, but he also strongly advised that the country should be disarmed, and that severe measures should be adopted. At the same time he gave it as his opinion that "as long as there are two distinct legislatures in England and Ireland, no measures can be adopted to procure a solid peace between them. The great object should therefore be an Union to obtain which is now within our reach."[3] These letters of Knox to Pelham, which are quoted at length by Mr. Lecky, show a great knowledge of the political condition of the country. He thought that "Catholic emancipation unaccompanied by complete Parliamentary reform would be the loss of the whole body of Orangemen, without the acquisition of the Catholics," and suggested that these two measures should be reserved as douceurs to the people of 1797. March.

[1] Lecky's "History of Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 308.

[2] "The mischief of the Association of Orangemen consisted in the principle of national disunion, which it essentially went to establish in perpetuity."—Plowden, vol. ii. part i. p. 671.

[3] Lecky's "Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 316.

1797. March. Ireland, in order to induce them to agree to an Union of the Legislatures of the two countries.[1] It is therefore possible that Pitt, who took this course two years later, was to some extent affected by the advice.

Most of the country gentlemen and magistrates now left their estates and resided in the towns, or proceeded to England, but there were some notable exceptions, among whom Lord Downshire and Lord Cavan showed great zeal and courage. But Pelham had instructed the military to act without the advice or help of the civil magistrates, for indeed many of them were strongly in favour of reform and urged it upon the Ministers. Several also wished to mitigate the severity of military law, and permitted persons under suspicion of disaffection to take the oath of allegiance and then gave them certificates without demanding a surrender of arms.

1797. April. Although these signs were serious the Government still persisted on their course relentlessly and would not grant any measure of Reform, however mild, although repeatedly urged to do so by Grattan, Ponsonby, and many of the country gentlemen. Camden indeed admitted that it was a subject of complaint and a cause of jealousy that individuals had so much influence in the decisions of Parliament, but thought that in order to counteract that jealousy the country must be ruled by an English party, since "it would be very dangerous to attempt to govern Ireland in a more popular manner than the present."[2] Whether that was the case or not it is certain that the popular element did not enter at all into the Government of Ireland at this time, for it was practically a pure autocracy, nominated by the British Cabinet, and in spite of the fact that the House of Commons was elected, 200 out of 300 members were returned by venal and close boroughs which ensured that the Ministers had always an overwhelming majority. Grattan now appealed once more in vain for Reform,[3] and then, accompanied by

[1] Lecky's "Eighteenth Century," vol. vii. p. 318.

[2] Camden to Portland, April 3, 1797. Lecky, vol. vii. p. 323.

[3] Grattan's speech to a meeting of freeholders and freemen of the city of Dublin on July 20, 1797, is given in Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. Appendix No. cviii. He states if the people are not allowed to form an integral part of the constitution, "The Minister stands in the place of Parliament. He becomes

Francis Wheatley R.A. pinx.

Walker & Cockerell. sculp.

Right Hon. Henry Grattan, M.P.

Ponsonby, Curran, and others, seceded from Parliamentary life, and did not reappear until the debates on the question of Union. 1797. April.

That the Government were resolutely opposed to Parliamentary Reform, Catholic Emancipation and a Commutation of Tithes was clearly evident, and that a legislative Union was seriously being considered in the inner circles was also dimly felt. Everything seemed to point to this necessity, nor was it supposed by the most pessimistic of prophets that the Union would be steadily resisted by the majority of Irish members in the Imperial Parliament a century hence. But there is no evidence which warrants the accusation that the Government deliberately forced on a rebellion in order to have an excuse for bringing in an Act of Union. Statements to an opposite effect have since been made by nationalist members of Parliament during the last century, even until recent years, but are not supported by sound historical facts.

That form of patriotism which causes a small poverty-stricken state to prefer to govern itself, however badly, rather than form an integral part of a great and powerful empire seems irrational and unpractical to the mind of an average Englishman, who is essentially utilitarian and unemotional in his ideas of practical policy. His own independence has never been assailed, and although in the Colonies he insists upon having absolute self-government, he prefers to be under the flag of his mother country rather than to have a new and insignificant one of his own. The Scotch also are a practical commercial nation, and recognise the advantage of the Union, and they also have the gratification of knowing that their King at one time became King of England, which ensures that subsequent monarchs have some descent from the Scotch, but the Irish have always felt in their hearts that they were a conquered race, held down by force, and it is not therefore surprising that an unsuccessful majority should easily be aroused by politicians and priests in favour of Home Rule, in spite of the fact that it is certain the country 1797.

the arbiter of your lives and fortunes, and transfers that dominion to the British Cabinet on whom he depends, and thus reimposes on this realm the legislative power of another country," p. 281.

1797. could not be defended and governed from its own resources, and that it is not at all probable that a Parliament sitting in Dublin and legislating for local affairs could materially improve the welfare of the country. Patriotism, like other high and noble emotional forces, may cause the most extreme and futile actions when misdirected in its aims, and it was thus with the United Irishmen, whose efforts now began to assume more the character of a national movement than an agitation for Reform and Catholic emancipation, while the information derived from the spies proved conclusively that the desire for a Republic was a greater incentive than the wish for domestic reforms.[1]

1797. September. At this time indeed the spirit of discontent and the plausibility of the revolutiontary doctrines strongly affected all but the most level-headed and practical minds, and it is therefore doubtful whether a concession of Reform with Catholic emancipation would have led to an immediate settling down of the country. Both sides had, however, declared war to the bitter end; severe repression was ordered and carried out by the military, while informers, or suspected informers, were frequently murdered, and threats of assassination were habitually employed to prevent jurymen, witnesses, and magistrates from doing their duty.[2]

Nevertheless, by the autumn some real progress had been made towards the pacification of the North, and great numbers of guns, pikes, and other weapons had been seized by force, so that in July the Government were able to revoke the proclamation placing Armagh under the Insurrection Act. The Law Courts began again to administer justice, and in the September assizes both the juries and witnesses discharged their duty boldly, although the sentences to death for treason were very numerous. But one case went far to rouse up all the latent hatred against English justice, and was used with effect to stimulate the rebels to greater

[1] M'Nally writes that the peasants have "an attachment to French principles in politics and religion lately imbibed, and an ardent desire for a republican Government." Lecky, vol. vii. p. 143.

[2] Plowden argues that the advantage of a Union to Ireland was that it would be "relieved from the ferocious severity with which an Irish Government has never failed, when permitted, to oppress and aggrieve their countrymen," vol. ii. part i. p. 653.

exertions. William Orr, a young Presbyterian farmer of property and influence, and an active member of the United Irishmen, was indicted for administering the oath to two soldiers, which at this time was a capital offence under the Insurrection Act. The prisoner, who had been kept in custody for a year untried, at length was charged at the assizes in September 1797. The evidence was conclusive, the prosecution being ably conducted by Wolfe, the Attorney-General, before Lord Yelverton, one of the most merciful judges on the Irish Bench. The jury, after being locked up all night, brought in a verdict of Guilty, with a recommendation to mercy, which was at once transmitted to Dublin. Two days afterwards, when sentence was to be pronounced, Lord Yelverton asked Judge Chamberlain to assist on the Bench, and Orr was condemned to death. The greatest efforts were at once made to cause the Government to act upon the recommendation to mercy of the jury, but the evidence was so clear that the judge could not support it and the execution was carried out. There was no doubt that, according to the evidence, Orr was guilty, and that according to law the sentence was just, yet the policy of carrying it out to the letter in this case was not wise, and led to the greatest excitement and resentment. That the Irish Government now relied entirely upon force, and not at all on conciliation, will be admitted by all, and if such measures caused the outward signs of disaffection to become scarcer, the inward resentment was growing more intense, while the pressure, unrelieved by the safety-valve of public oratory and agitation, was steadily increasing and rapidly leading to the fatal explosion. 1797. September.

Many men of thought recognised the dangers ahead, and among them was the Earl of Moira, an intimate friend of the Prince of Wales and the Whigs, a distinguished soldier in the American war, and one of the largest landowners in Ulster. He therefore brought up the whole question of the government of Ireland in the English House of Lords on November 22nd, and began by stating that the negotiation with France being broken off "is an event which may be productive of little short of the destruction, not only of this, but of the sister country," and then proceeded to state that 1797. November.

1797. November. the trade of Ireland was desponding, drooping and distressed, and asked whether this country was not bound to inquire into the evil and apply a remedy. "My lords, I have seen in Ireland the most absurd, as well as the most disgusting tyranny that any nation ever groaned under . . . men have been half hanged and then brought to life, in order to induce them to confess the crimes with which they have been charged." No one dare print accounts of these atrocities in the newspapers of Ireland for "What happened to the *Northern Star?* A party of troops went in broad day and destroyed the whole property, types, and everything, belonging to that paper."[1] He then proceeded to plead for moderation, and gave it as his opinion that if the Government proceeded on the present system for a little longer, "all hope is lost of seeing Ireland connected with the British Empire in five years' time."

Lord Grenville was unable "to discern what should alienate the affections of Ireland, or indispose her from uniting in the general co-operation against the enemy." He then stated that England had been for thirty years "distinguished by the same uniform tenderness of regard, by the same undeviating adherence to the mild principles of a conciliatory system." He proceeded to vindicate the military from any imputation of cruelty, and if there had been individual excesses "were there no Courts of Justice?" But the troops were sent over "to counteract the machinations of a set of men who were plotting the destruction of the country, and favouring the designs of our inveterate enemy," and could it excite surprise if "against such men they have been at times incited to acts of harshness and severity." Lord Grenville concluded by asking their lordships whether they would interfere on the present occasion, "and tell the Parliament of Ireland and the Irish magistracy that we were more careful of the interests and happiness of the Irish people than they were, and that the English military were not to obey the Irish laws, but the arbitrary instructions of the British Parliament."[2]

Meanwhile the first Budget was brought forward on

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 1061.
[2] Ibid., vol. xxxii. p. 1106 *et seq.*

November 24th, with a deficiency of nineteen millions, which Pitt proposed to cover by a new loan of twelve millions, and a new tax to raise seven millions within the year. Fox and Sheridan were requested by their constituents to return to their places to oppose this, and the former opined that the result of the Bill would tend "to the loss of liberty of our persons," while the latter stated that the war was continued "for the sole purpose of keeping nine worthless Ministers in their places."[1] The minority against the Bill on the second reading was only fifty and on the third seventy-five, the House of Commons thoroughly understanding that the Government now had no choice in the matter of peace or war. But there was much cause for gratulation, and on December 19th a special service of Public Thanksgiving for the Naval victories over the French, Spaniards, and Dutch was held at St. Paul's, which was attended by the King, Queen, and Royal Family, the Cabinet, Ambassadors, and Houses of Parliament. This undoubtedly reminded the nation of Great Britain's supremacy at sea, and reassured it that, if costly and inevitable, war would never find the British sailor wanting in skill and courage to maintain the trust imposed upon him.

1797. December.

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 1066.

CHAPTER VI

Executive of United Irish in 1798—O'Connor, Emmet, M'Nevin, Bond, and Fitzgerald — Arrest of O'Connor and O'Coigly at Margate — Reynolds informs — Arrest of leaders at Bond's house — Proclamation by Irish Government—Instructions to Sir Ralph Abercromby—Action of leading Catholics—Extreme measures of the military—House burning, flogging, and torture—Measures of the Government—Mistake of Sheriff Fitzgerald —Trial of O'Connor, O'Coigly, and Binns—Debate on legality of arrest of O'Connor's brother—Arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—His death—Information of Captain Armstrong — Plot to seize Dublin — Arrest of Byrne.

1798. At the beginning of 1798 the supreme executive body of the United Irish estimated that over half a million persons had been sworn into the Society, and that more than half that number could be relied upon to appear in the field. The leaders now were Thomas Addis Emmet, Arthur O'Connor, William James M'Nevin, Oliver Bond, and Richard M'Cormick. Emmet was undoubtedly sincere in wishing for domestic reforms rather than in promoting rebellion, but he was chiefly a theoretical politician skilled in constructing paper constitutions for Ireland, and had little conception of the characters and passions of the people he proposed to govern by annual Parliaments elected by universal suffrage. He afterwards became Attorney-General of New York.[1] O'Connor, on the other hand, imagined that Ireland could be better governed without the aid of the English, who he believed wished to keep the Irish in a condition of poverty and disorder, in order that they should never be in a condition to become an independent nation. He had no sympathy for priest-rule but advocated the emancipation of the Catholics. Afterwards he became a General in the French service.[2] Dr. M'Nevin was strongly in favour of Catholic emancipation, but after his visit to France, being fully persuaded that the Directory

[1] "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. xvii. p. 363. Madden's "United Irishmen," vol. iii. p. 350.

[2] Ibid., vol. ii. pp. 289–324. "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. xli. p. 394.

would invade Ireland, opposed all rebellion until the arrival of the French army. Oliver Bond had already been imprisoned for his political conduct in 1793,[1] and was strongly in favour of uniting the religious sects under the standard of the United Irishmen. 1798.

M'Cormick had been secretary of the Catholic Committee and was a warm friend of Tone. Several others in the provincial Directory of Leinster also aided in guiding the conspiracy. The most important was Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who, as we have already related, was in the habit of visiting Paine, from whom he imbibed his ideas on the rights of man. Born in 1763, the fifth son of the Duke of Leinster, he had entered the army at an early age, but going to Paris in 1792 had been carried away by the plausibility of the Republican doctrines. To him, therefore, was entrusted the military organisation of the rebellion, and he was intended to be commander-in-chief. 1798. January.

The conspiracy was thus formidable both in the numbers engaged, and in the enthusiasm of its leaders, but the Government, consisting of Lord Camden, Mr. Pelham, Lord Castlereagh, and the Chancellor, John Fitzgibbon, supplied as they were with unlimited, and to a great extent accurate, information, and with the military strength of England behind them, were in a favourable position to cope with a formidable insurrection even if aided by a French invasion. The United Irish executive were now by no means unanimous in opinion, for O'Connor was in favour of acting at once before the French could arrive, whereas Emmet wished to wait for them, and succeeded in persuading his fellow conspirators to do so, but only after they were all convinced that an invasion was imminent.[2] The English Government had also received secret information that extensive preparations were being made at Dunkirk, Havre, Honfleur, and Calais.[3]

[1] "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. v. p. 341.

[2] They had received information that French assistance would arrive in April or May. "Report of the Secret Committee," Appendix, pp. 107–122.

[3] This information, published on page 165 of the first volume of "Castlereagh's Correspondence," is evidently a gross exaggeration of the actual facts. At this date it is certain that 275,000 troops were not intended for Great Britain. Bonaparte thought 60,000 men would be sufficient to capture London. See Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, vol. ix. p. 363.

1798. February. Both the law upholders and the law breakers were thus prepared, the forces of the latter being organised, while O'Connor was sent to France to arrange for a combined movement. He travelled in a military disguise, calling himself Colonel Morris, and was accompanied by a priest named O'Coigly or Quigley, who called himself Captain Jones, and an agent of the Corresponding Society named John Binns; there were also two others, Allen and Leary, who were apparently servants. From London they proceeded to Margate, and bargained for a boat to take them across the Channel, but they had been diligently tracked, and on February 28th the whole five were arrested.

The Government by this time had a great deal of information but were unable to proceed against the leaders of the Society because both M'Nally and Turner, their chief informers, refused to appear as witnesses, the latter indeed refusing to come to Ireland. Nevertheless, Camden was anxious to arrest the ringleaders, even if insufficient evidence could be produced to justify a trial, but Portland absolutely forbade it.[1] At length an informer named Thomas Reynolds gave the information required. Being a brother-in-law of Wolfe Tone, and a distant connection of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, he had joined the Society in 1797 in order to assist in advancing the cause of the Catholics, but was persuaded by Lord Edward to become a Colonel in the rebel army, and to join the executive of Leinster. Learning then that a rebellion was imminent, and that it was intended to assassinate, if necessary, many of the Irish Government, he reluctantly decided to defeat the plan, and informed the authorities that on March 12th the whole provincial Directory of Leinster would meet at the house of Oliver Bond, to prepare an insurrection. Major Swan, a magistrate for the county of Dublin, attended by thirteen police sergeants, therefore proceeded to Bond's house at the appointed time, arrested fifteen of the leaders of the United Irishmen, and seized all their papers. Fitzgerald, Emmet, Jackson, and M'Nevin were not at the meeting, but were all arrested soon after, with the exception of the first named, who remained concealed

1798. March.

[1] Correspondence between Camden and Portland. Lecky's "Eighteenth Century," vol. viii. p. 9.

for nearly a month. There is no class of men who, as a rule, deserve or obtain less sympathy than informers, but the base motive of gain seems to have actuated the Irish spies less than a desire to save their necks. In the case of Reynolds, however, it is possible that he was actuated by a sincere desire to preserve the lives of the Government officials and to prevent the insurrection, for it is certain that when he understood to what extreme lengths it was proposed to proceed, he at once informed and endeavoured to retire from the Secret Society which he had been induced to join. His position now was extremely hazardous. The Government could not openly protect him, and on three occasions attempts were made to assassinate him. Soldiers were quartered at his house, Kilkea Castle, in Kildare, who ransacked the place with ruthless violence in search of arms, and finally a number of United Irishmen informed against him, and he was arrested and sent to Dublin for trial. He then pleaded he was a protected person and consented to give information on oath.[1] 1798. March.

In spite of the fact that the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, the Home Secretary would not give permission to make arrests unless it was possible to bring forward enough evidence in public to justify a conviction, but he was not supported in this by Lord Grenville, who wrote to Lord Camden in quite a different strain.[2]

The same day on which this letter was written the Irish Government took a very decided step by issuing a Proclamation which stated that, as a traitorous conspiracy existed, they had therefore, "by and with the advice of his Majesty's

[1] Plowden thought the motives of Reynolds were pecuniary, but he only asked for £500, and he certainly lost far more than that in the damage done to his house and furniture. See "Historical Review of Ireland," by Plowden, vol. ii. part i. p. 673. See also Mr. Justice Day at the trial of Byrne. Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 521. "Mr. Reynolds has been the object, in my mind, of more invective and obloquy than the evidence warranted."

[2] Lord Grenville to Lord Camden, March 30, 1798: "If the existence of a treasonable plot be proved by the conviction at law of some of the offenders, and if it can be shown by sufficient evidence both that other persons were generally concerned in the practices connected with, and forming a part of that conspiracy, and that unusual means have been used to deprive the public of the testimony of those witnesses by whom the particular overt acts could have been proved, in such case the power of Parliament to punish by legislative acts, not going to life or limb, is unquestionable in practice, and consonant to all the true principles of justice."—"Castlereagh's Correspondence," vol. i. p. 164.

1798. March. Privy Council, issued the most direct and positive orders to the officer commanding his Majesty's forces to employ them with the utmost vigour and decision for the immediate suppression thereof, and also to recover the arms which have been traitorously forced from his Majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects, and to disarm all rebels." The Proclamation then proceeds to call on all subjects to aid the military in this enterprise.[1]

Sir Ralph Abercromby, the Commander-in-Chief, in order to have clearly defined the powers thus conferred upon him, wrote to the Lord Lieutenant the next day asking if the Proclamation "gives power to quarter troops in any buildings whatever; to press horses and carriages; to demand forage and provisions; to hold courts-martial for the trial and punishment of offenders of all descriptions, civil or military, with the power of confirming and causing to be executed the sentence of all such courts-martial, and to issue Proclamations."[2]

1798. April. In answer to this Lord Castlereagh, who was acting in the place of Mr. Pelham as Chief Secretary, replied that the Proclamation gave all these powers. Express orders were also given to Abercromby to employ the troops in the disturbed districts, especially in Kildare, Tipperary, Limerick, Cork, the King's County, the Queen's County, and Kilkenny, without waiting for directions from the magistrates, in order to quell the insurrection, and to disarm the rebels.

The Commander-in-Chief therefore issued Proclamations demanding that all concealed arms should be given up, and threatening that if they were not large bodies of troops should live among the people on free quarters. The prescribed districts indeed were put absolutely under martial law, the most severe remedy for the evil it was possible to adopt. But such absolute power given to the military was certain to be abused by the troops and bitterly resented by the peasants who imagined that they were sent to exterminate the Catholics. The Archbishop of Dublin, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kilmacclaugh and Kilfenora,

[1] *Annual Register*, 1798.

[2] Abercromby to Camden, April 1, 1798. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 168.

and others now did their best to correct this erroneous idea, and to keep the priests and people of their dioceses peaceful, exhorting them in long addresses "to obey the ordinances of the State in all civil and temporal concerns, and to avoid all illegal oaths and combinations."[1] 1798. April.

As the conspiracy still seemed to gain ground several of the leading members of the Catholic laity also published a declaration expressing their abhorrence and detestation of traitorous principles, and stating that they felt called upon to remonstrate with such of the deluded people of their persuasion as were now engaged in open rebellion against his Majesty's Government, and to point out that if they did not relinquish their treasonable plans it would subject them to loss of life and property, expose their families to beggary, and disgrace their religion. This was signed on May 6th by Lords Fingall, Germanstown, Southwell, Kenmare, Sir Edward Bellew, the President of the College of Maynooth, and forty-one other gentlemen, some of whom were professors of divinity. 1798. May.

These declarations prove clearly that however much religious animosities may have actuated the peasants, and however much these feelings were used to incite the people to rebellion, the upper and educated section of the Catholic Irish intended to abide loyally by the Government and support them in suppressing the rising. Unfortunately these exhortations to loyalty had not the effect of the insidious hopes held out by the emissaries of the United Irish, who promised abatements of rent, tithes, and many other payments to the peasants if they would join in their cause. As we have pointed out, the movement now was far more a national than a religious one, and many of the leaders of the United Irish were Protestants, but nevertheless after the outbreak of the rebellion the conflict largely resolved itself into one between the Orangemen and Catholics.[2]

In judging the conduct of the Irish Government it must be remembered that all the secret information at their dis-

[1] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 170. Ibid., p. 299.

[2] Musgrave states that the Protestant Houses were burned but not the Catholic, p. 315. Plowden absolutely contradicts this statement, vol. ii. p. 710.

1798. May. posal pointed to an early rising on a very formidable scale, and it was evidently their duty to act with extreme vigour and to take measures in time, but when one examines the information tended by the spies, both from the Continent and at home, it becomes apparent that, although it is in the main accurate, their own deductions, which they almost always inserted into their reports, were in nearly every case affected by their particular hopes and fears. But if the rebels overrated the powers of their paper army, officered for the most part by civilians, armed with pikes, and neither disciplined nor drilled, it is certain it afterwards proved far more formidable than the Government expected. It is true that when a whole populace, organised by the regular government of the country, rises against a foreign invader, the difficulties of a successful conquest are increased tenfold, but it is excusable not to anticipate such serious trouble when the whole machinery of government is already in the hands of those who have the command of the troops, and when the object is not conquest but to restore order in a disaffected part of the Empire. Nevertheless the Government evidently intended to suppress the rising absolutely by force, and of the various methods adopted the burning of houses of suspected persons was carried on extensively, but the free quarters was most felt as falling equally on innocent and guilty. There is reason to believe that this extreme measure, indeed, was adopted against the wishes of the Irish gentry, and this was well known to Camden, who wrote to Portland on the subject.[1]

1798. April. General Abercromby now resigned in order to take command in Scotland,[2] and General Lake was appointed in his place, to whom Castlereagh wrote stating that the Lord Lieutenant requested him to stop the free quarters and to adopt such other vigorous and effectual measures for enforcing the speedy surrender of arms as in his discretion

[1] April 23, 1798. Lecky, vol. viii. p. 15.

[2] There is no space here for a consideration of the causes which led to Abercromby's resignation, but the bulk of the evidence leads one to suppose that he disapproved of the methods he was ordered to carry out, and that he distrusted the troops he commanded. Froude's opinion, "He seemed to have come to Ireland to effect the utmost extremity of mischief which his opportuuities allowed him," is most biassed and unjust.—Froude's "English in Ireland," vol. iii. p. 328.

he should think fit.[1] This order does not seem to have been obeyed, nor do the Government appear to have instructed Lake to restrain the excesses of his subaltern officers and men, or to check the absolute military license which was now allowed to rule supreme. Any house in which a weapon was found was at once burnt, many men who resisted were shot dead on their thresholds, while numberless families were deprived of all their possessions and driven away homeless. Torture was employed to discover arms and to gain information, and multitudes were flogged until they fainted. Outrages on women were common, and the peasant girl who wore green, the colours of the United Irish, ran the risk of having her petticoat cut off her back by the sabre of some brutal dragoon. House burning and flogging was carried out by the orders of subalterns or sergeants of militia, and often without the semblance of a judicial investigation. Several of the victims died under the lash, and others committed suicide to escape the punishments which often took the grossest forms of cruelty. Some soldiers of the North Cork Militia are said to have invented a fiendish torture. A cap of linen or brown paper was fastened with pitch to the victim's head, and then set on fire, nor could it be removed without tearing out the hair, and causing the most terrible lacerations of the skin.[2] This disgraceful conduct of the troops led to the most terrible reprisals when they were caught in small numbers or unarmed, but it is fair to say that a few regiments seem to have behaved tolerably well, particularly the King's County Militia who were quartered in the County of Carlow, while on the other hand the North Cork Militia, the Welsh regiment of Ancient Britons, and two Hessian regiments appear to have acquired the worst reputations. 1798. April.

Reports now poured in from the Colonels with lists of suspected names, and the secret sign of the United Society was soon known, which was partly a motion and partly words. First the hands were clasped, and this was answered by placing the right hand to the hip, and then the words, "Be steady," were answered by "I am determined to free my country or die. Liberty! Liberty!"[3] 1798. May.

[1] Castlereagh to Lake, April 25, 1798. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 189.

[2] Plowden, vol. ii. part i. p. 713.

[3] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 189.

1798. May. That the Government did not intend to run any risks is proved by the fact that a scheme for the defence of Dublin had been drawn up by General Vallencey as early as 1796, in which he suggested that eighteen redoubts should be constructed, containing five 12-pounders in each which would be worked by twenty-four men. These were to be so arranged as to flank each other by their cannon fire, and the exterior circuit of the whole was to be eight miles long. The canals of the city and the grounds of the Park were also to be used in the military defences, and it was further advised that the city should be provisioned against a siege so that the inmates should not be dependent for supplies from England. This extensive scheme proves conclusively that the military authorities expected that the rebellion, if attended by an invasion, would attain to very serious proportions.

1798. April. The policy of the Government is easy to understand when we remember, first, that they daily feared another attempt by France to invade[1] England or Ireland[2] or both led by Bonaparte in person; secondly, that they expected a most formidable rebellion all over Ireland; and, thirdly, that they received advice from their military experts which by no means tended to reassure them.[3] They decided, and no doubt correctly, that it was better to stamp out all hopes of a successful rising by forcibly disarming the people beforehand rather than to wait until it had occurred, and

[1] See letter to General Ross from Lord Cornwallis. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 332.

[2] "Nothing has come from the Great Nation for some time back; but the last communication from that quarter contained repeated assurances that 'invasion should follow invasion though defeat succeeded defeat until Ireland was free,'" from J. W., January 8th. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 351.

[3] "It may so happen that the enemy may push with a fair wind for St. George's Channel, land at the Murrough of Wicklow, and pass their fleet northwards. What a situation would the Metropolis be reduced to were such an event to take place!"—General Vallancey, December 10, 1796. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 182. "Dublin Castle considered as the Seat of Government is as secure as any place in or near Dublin. When it is no longer tenable the Chief Governor, his Council and his Cabinet must follow the army."—Abercromby to Castlereagh, April 18, 1798. Ibid., p. 186. "Since my return to Dublin I have examined all the avenues about and all the situations in the town, and find not one of them capable of being formed into a post either of security or convenience."—Hon. Captain Pakenham to Castlereagh, April 27, 1798. Ibid., p. 196.

then to proceed by the usual legal methods. But there is equally no doubt that the Government deserve great blame for throwing the whole responsibility on the military authorities and giving them absolute power without attempting to ensure that the ordinary methods of justice should be observed. Conduct which would not have been permitted for a moment if our army were occupying a hostile country was allowed when it was engaged in keeping order in a part of our own kingdom. By any and every means it seemed necessary either to crush the country into passive submission or to force it into open rebellion before the organisation of the rebels could be perfected, but that could be no excuse for allowing irresponsible young subalterns and half-disciplined soldiers to punish the people at their pleasure.[1] 1798. April.

That this policy of the Government succeeded in bringing on the rebellion earlier than the United Irishmen intended, is clearly proved by the evidence of the leaders when examined before the secret committee of the Irish House of Commons.[2] But that it was attended by the most terrible evils is also equally true, for the sad history of this period proves only too clearly that when a man is placed in the position of judge, jury, and executioner, no justice is likely to be administered. 1898. May.

The excesses were, however, not entirely confined to the military, as was brought prominently before the public in the case of Thomas Judkin Fitzgerald, the High Sheriff of Tipperary. He appears on the whole to have exercised his function of securing arms with a great deal of firmness combined with moderation and even clemency, for he was ready to pardon many who admitted they were members of the Society, but he proceeded with the greatest severity against the suspected who would not confess, and flogged them without mercy. In this manner he recovered cart loads of arms,

[1] Froude, who writes with a strong tendency to favour the methods of the Government, writes, "In so rude a scene there were doubtless instances of unnecessary harshness."—"English in Ireland," vol. iii. p. 336.

[2] Emmet stated that "it was determined to avoid an insurrection until the French should come, had not the severe measures adopted in Kildare by the King's Ministers urged the alternative of rising or yielding up the cause. He believed that had they waited until the French came, the rising would have been more general and formidable." Other witnesses gave similar evidence. Abstract of Report of Committee of Secrecy. *Annual Register*, 1798.

1798. May. and doubtless many innocents suffered, who were powerless to resist and whose complaints would not have been heeded, but he seems to have made a great mistake in the case of a man named Wright, a schoolmaster in the town of Clonmel, who fell under his suspicion. Some poor wretch, writhing under the torture of the lash, had, probably to save himself further agony, stated that Wright was the Secretary of the United Irish in Tipperary, and although evidence obtained in such a manner would be, to any judicial mind, absolutely worthless, Fitzgerald at once concluded that this was the truth, and ordered him of his own authority to be first flogged and then shot. Wright was therefore stripped naked, tied to a ladder, and one hundred and fifty lashes were administered, after which he was thrown into prison, a mass of bleeding wounds. Being a man of some position and with influential friends Wright proceeded against Fitzgerald at the Clonmel Assizes on March 14, 1799, and having called witnesses to prove the flogging, and a surgeon to prove the effects of it, others proceeded to attest his perfect loyalty, and the jury found a verdict for him with £500 damages and 6d. costs.[1]

The Government had already at this date passed an Act indemnifying loyalists for illegal acts committed in order to suppress the rebellion, but Wright contended that the indemnity only applied to cases in which the magistrates acted on some evidence of treason, and in this he was supported by Judges Yelverton and Chamberlain. After such a decision the Administration at once perceived that it was necessary to protect their own servants against such actions, which would no doubt be brought by hundreds of people who had been punished, whether innocent or guilty, without any clear evidence having been adduced against them. It was therefore enacted that if sheriffs or other officers were proceeded against for acts done in suppressing the rebellion, and a verdict was obtained against them, it would be null and void unless the jury distinctly found that the act had been done maliciously and not with any intent to suppress rebellion.[2]

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 766. The Government paid the fine and afterwards created Fitzgerald a baronet.

[2] 39 George III., Chapter 50.

Justice considered in the abstract is one of the grandest and highest of all human instincts, but when administered by a court of law, it must inevitably fall far below such an ideal, and in times of rebellion, when the Government possess clear evidence from informers who refuse to appear, it is manifestly impossible that society can be protected, by the ordinary legal methods of administering justice, from a dangerous member who must either be detained without evidence which can be made public, or tried and acquitted although known to be guilty. 1798. May.

Unlike the man Wright, who was flogged without evidence or trial, the leaders of the movement, who were arrested at Margate, were known to be guilty of organising the rebellion, and were put on their trial at Maidstone on May 21st. The Attorney-General, Sir John Scott, and the Solicitor-General, Sir John Mitford, appeared on the part of the Crown, and Mr. Plumer, afterwards Master of the Rolls, defended the prisoners. By several witnesses their whole journey was traced and the papers found in their possession were produced. As usual in State Trials at this period, the leading members of the Opposition appeared to attest to the character and principles of the rebels, and Arthur O'Connor called Messrs. Fox, Sheridan, and Erskine, the Earl of Suffolk, the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Thanet, but the strongest evidence in his favour was that of Grattan, who stated that he had been acquainted with him since 1792, and that he had never heard him express any opinion which could lead to the supposition that he would favour an invasion of the country.[1] Now, although the testimony of M'Nally, Reynolds, Turner, and others would have at once convicted O'Connor, the only evidence that could be produced was that a letter was found, from the Executive of the United Irish to the French Directory, in a pocket-book in an overcoat which one witness swore belonged to O'Coigly, who at once denied the possession of it. The judge, in summing up, dwelt on this point as the

[1] The Duke of Norfolk considered him to be a "gentleman acting warmly in the political line." Mr. Grattan considered O'Connor had a very good private character, and that he certainly would not favour an invasion of his country by the French. Mr. Fox always thought Mr. O'Connor was well affected to his country. Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 41.

1798. May. only evidence showing that any communication with France had been attempted.[1] The result was a verdict of "Not Guilty" for O'Connor, Binns, and the two servants Allen and Leary, but O'Coigly was found guilty, and was executed on June 7th, on Penenden Heath. In spite of this verdict the Government did not intend that one of the Executive of the United Irish should thus easily slip through their fingers, and O'Connor was at once re-arrested in Court, on a warrant of the Home Secretary, charging him again with high treason, and fortunately for Ireland, as well as for his own safety, he remained in prison during the rebellion. This action led to a disgraceful scene in Court, the supporters of O'Connor attempting to set him at liberty, but after some struggling and a free display of swords and constables' staves he was secured. For thus defying the law one of his witnesses, Lord Thanet, was sentenced to be fined £1000 and imprisoned in the tower for a year, and one of his counsel, Mr. Robert Fergusson, was fined £100 and confined to the King's Bench prison for the same period. O'Connor himself was detained for several months, but after admitting his guilt was allowed to retire to France, where he became a Lieutenant-General in the army, and survived until 1852.

At the same time Roger O'Connor was also captured. The double arrest of the brothers without any reason which could be made public was then made the subject of debate in both Houses of Parliament in England. In the House of Lords the question of the legality of the action of the Home Secretary was raised on May 23rd,[2] and in the House of Commons Mr. St. John moved on June 11th for copies of all warrants from the Duke of Portland for apprehending Roger O'Connor and for sending him to Ireland.[3] The whole question was based upon the powers of the Home Secretary, but the Attorney-General explained that the Secretary of State could

[1] In referring to Messrs. O'Connor and Binns the Judge said, "Before you can convict the prisoners, I think you must be satisfied that they knew the contents of this paper, because there is no other evidence but that letter from whence to impute any species of treason or communication from England to France to either of them."—Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 137.

[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 1458.

[3] Ibid., p. 1462.

not issue a warrant without evidence, and he was bound to suppose he had acted rightly.[1] 1798. May.

Meanwhile a vigorous search was made in Ireland for the Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army, Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The Government were already in possession of much evidence against him through the medium of the spy Turner, who usually resided at Hamburg, and had access to the letter-bag of Lady Fitzgerald, but the final tracking of the noble rebel was due to another informer, Magan, an obscure Catholic barrister of a contemptible character, whose sole motive for spying seems to have been pecuniary reward. He was of a shifty, nervous temperament, and at first would only communicate his information through the medium of a newspaper proprietor named Higgins, whose organ was subsidised by the Government. From him the authorities heard that the rising was to take place on May 23rd, and that Lord Edward was waiting to take command of the Leinster corps of rebels. It seems curious that the authorities, with so much information, should have been unable to find Fitzgerald, but there was a very indifferent police force in Dublin at this time, and most of the State arrests were left in the hands of the military, who were not trained to trace rebels, but only to deal with them when discovered.

The Administration were indeed anxious to spare him if he would leave the kingdom, and the Chancellor stated to one of his nearest relations early in March that the ports should be thrown open to him and no hindrance offered.[2] Not only did the Government thus advise his flight, but Reynolds, after giving information, also visited him obviously with the idea of helping his escape.

The time for clemency had now passed, and it was considered to be extremely dangerous to allow him to remain longer at large, so on May 11th the Government offered a reward of £1000 for his discovery. In spite of this he seems to

[1] "It is evident under the present circumstances, and with the evidence of the nature of that of which Government here is at present in possession, strong and decisive as it is, that none of these persons can be brought to trial without exposing secrets of the last importance to the State, the revealing of which may implicate the safety of the two kingdoms."—Wickham to Castlereagh, June 8, 1798. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 216.

[2] Moore's "Life of Fitzgerald," vol. ii. p. 58.

1798. May. have still been most reckless, even occasionally visiting his wife, but his usual residence was at the house of a feather merchant named Murphy, in Thomas Street, although he occasionally stayed in the private dwelling-house of a publican named Moore. Magan having informed the authorities, now made arrangements with Miss Moore that Lord Edward should move to his quarters on May 19th, but was anxious that the arrest should not be made there, but in the street before he arrived.[1] Major Sirr and some troops were therefore on the spot at the appointed hour, and met Lord Edward and his party, when a scuffle took place, the Major being knocked down while his prey escaped and returned to Murphy's house. Here he was visited by a rebel named Neilson, who had been sixteen months in prison and was well known to the authorities, and on his departure from the house Major Sirr, Major Swan, Captain Ryan, and eight soldiers entered. Swan and Ryan mounted the stairs while Sirr and the soldiers remained below to prevent a rescue, the first named immediately entering the room where Murphy and Fitzgerald were. The latter at once sprang from the bed on which he was lying and violently attacked Swan with a dagger, wounding him severely. Swan now fired a pistol at Fitzgerald, but missed his aim, and then hastened to summon the soldiers to his aid. Ryan, armed only with a sword cane, next closed with Fitzgerald, and speedily received a mortal wound in the stomach. Sirr now arrived with the soldiers and found Ryan was sinking, while Fitzgerald was standing so fiercely at bay that he was compelled to fire at him.[2] The bullet wounded him in the shoulder, and after a desperate resistance he was at length overpowered, and removed to Newgate, where his wound rapidly suppurated and, septicæmia intervening, he died on June 4th. There is always a halo of romance built round the memory of prominent rebels, more especially when they belong to the class who have least to gain and most to lose by opposing the existing order of things, but if there was nothing great or

[1] Fitzpatrick's "Secret Service under Pitt," p. 131.

[2] Moore's "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," vol. ii. p. 85. There are considerable discrepancies in the various accounts of this famous arrest. Plowden states that Lord Edward first fired a pistol, vol. ii. p. 61.

noble in the life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, there is a pathetic interest in his end. That as an impressionable young man he should have been easily persuaded to embrace the plausible doctrines of Paine is not extraordinary, and that as an extreme patriot he should risk so much for his country proves he possessed a sturdy independent spirit, but his practical actions were rash and reckless in the extreme, and, if he had lived, in all probability he would have attempted some impossible enterprise, and led many others besides himself to certain death. 1798. May.

Of the informer Magan, little can be said for his memory, for he appears not only to have acted throughout for gain, but to have refused to give information when no money was forthcoming.[1] In due course he was paid the £1000 offered as a reward.

Immediately after the arrests at Bond's house in March a new Directory was formed, of which two brothers of the name of Sheares were the most prominent members. They were the sons of a prosperous Cork banker, were lawyers, and had played an active part in the conspiracy since 1793. These two rebels were arrested immediately after the capture of Fitzgerald through the information of Captain Armstrong of the King's County Militia, a regiment which contained many disaffected men. It appears that Armstrong was a great reader, and frequented the shop of a bookseller named Byrne, who was a United Irishman. In course of conversation on politics Armstrong expressed some strong views on the subject of the badness of the Government in Ireland, and Byrne, imagining him to be a sympathiser, and eagerly hoping to win a valuable recruit in the shape of an officer in the army, asked him to meet the Sheares. Armstrong consented thoughtlessly, but soon discovered that the object was to engage him in the United Irish plot. He then became somewhat anxious as to the step he had taken and confided in his Colonel, who advised him it was his duty to see the Sheares and discover everything he could. This advice of Colonel L'Estrange Armstrong acted upon, and soon heard that the Directory intended to proceed with the rebellion at once, which was to begin with an attempt to surprise

[1] See "Secret Service under Pitt."

1798. May. the camp at Lehaunston where Armstrong's regiment was quartered, to seize the artillery at Chapelizod, and to capture Dublin, while at the same time a rising was to take place at Cork, directed by John Sheares. The plot was to seize the Lord Lieutenant in the Castle and all the Privy Councillors, the rebels hoping that great numbers of the soldiers would join them when the rebellion commenced. Armstrong immediately communicated this intelligence to Lord Castlereagh, and on May 21st the brothers were arrested. There was no doubt whatever of their guilt, but to complete the chain of evidence a Proclamation of a highly seditious character was discovered written by John, the younger brother, and intended to be published on the morning after the rebellion had broken out. It is a passionate harangue, calling on the Irish to "arise like a great and powerful people, to live free or die," and promises that the families of those who fell fighting should be recompensed by the grateful nation "out of that property which the crimes of our enemies have forfeited into its hands." One famous passage, threatening assassination to all who resisted, runs thus, "Let them find no quarter unless they shall prove their repentance, by speedily exchanging the standard of slavery for that of freedom, under which their former errors may be buried, and they may share the glory and advantages that are due to the patriot bands of Ireland;" and later on, "For the wretch who turns his sword against his native country let the national vengeance be visited on him, let him find no quarter."[1]

The disclosures of Armstrong confirmed the information which the Government had been receiving, and showed not only that the rising was near at hand, but that they might expect some disaffection in the troops. Indeed the task allotted to Armstrong by the rebels was to win over his regiment, and the names of some soldiers in it were given who were sworn as United Irishmen. He was also told that there were some members of the Society in every regiment which had been in Dublin for some years, and that many of the Roman Catholics among the militia had also joined. Byrne was arrested on the same day, and Neilson was also

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 387.

imprisoned, his plot for attempting the rescue of Lord Edward Fitzgerald having been exposed by a Catholic priest. The information was now complete, and on the 21st Castlereagh announced to the Lord Mayor of Dublin that a plot had been discovered for seizing the Executive Government. Next day the House of Commons was also informed of the same fact, and all awaited with anxiety the bursting of the storm. 1798. May.

CHAPTER VII

Commencement of Irish Rebellion, May 23, 1798—Attack on Naas—Treachery of Esmond—Government Proclamation—Defence of Dublin—Attacks on Monastrevan, Carlow, Hacketstown, and Tarah—Clemency of Dundas—Causes of insurrection in Wexford—Rebels on Vinegar Hill—Surrender of Wexford to rebels—Battle of New Ross—Massacre of Scullabogue Barn—Cornwallis appointed Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief—Troops arrive from England—Surrender of Wexford to General Moore—Harsh measures of General Lake—Debates in Parliament—Policy of Cornwallis—End of rebellion—Trial of the Sheares—Report of Secret Committee—Offer of condemned prisoners to give information accepted—Bill of attainder.

1798. May. THE rebellion was arranged to take place on May 23rd, and although most of the leaders were now arrested the original programme was commenced by the pre-arranged signal of stopping the mail coaches from Dublin, those going to Belfast, Athlone, Cork, and Limerick being all seized on that night. Early on the 24th many rebels were under arms in the counties of Dublin, Kildare, and Meath in spite of the rigorous disarmament which had taken place, and a force of 1000 men, led by a farmer named Reynolds, attempted to surprise and capture the town of Naas, but Lord Gosford, in command of a detachment of dragoon guards and a party of Armagh militia, was awaiting them.[1] The troops at first acted on the defensive, but after receiving three attacks from the rebels, at length changed their tactics and, charging, drove them through the streets. The rebels, casting away their arms, fled for their lives, closely pursued by the dragoons, and it is estimated that nearly one hundred and fifty were slain, only four being made prisoners, of whom three were hanged, but the fourth saved himself by turning informer.

[1] The intention of attacking Naas was communicated both to Lord Gosford and his son by two anonymous letters. Plowden argues that the disaffection must have been very great here or more information would have been given.—Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 688.

While this affair was proceeding another body attacked the yeomen and militia under Captain Griffiths at Clane, a few miles away, but they were also repulsed and pursued for several miles, many being killed, and every house in which refuge was sought being burnt to the ground. Five prisoners were here hanged and one shot. 1798. May.

In the meantime a terrible massacre of a small party of the troops had taken place at the town of Prosperous, which was garrisoned by a few men of the North Cork Militia and about twenty Ancient Britons under Captain Swayne. In the middle of the night the whole force was surprised and overwhelmed, and while the barracks burned, most of the troops and two civilian residents were murdered.[1] Griffiths, expecting that the party from Prosperous would next attack him, drew up his small force in a field and awaited for them. The rebels soon appeared and opened a heavy fire, but without effect, and a volley from the troops, followed by a charge, sent them headlong in flight, leaving many killed and wounded. Griffiths pursued as far as Prosperous, but did not enter the town, and then returned to Clane, whence the force prepared to march to Naas.

A yeoman named Mite now informed the captain that his first lieutenant, Dr. Esmonde, had actually commanded the rebels in the massacre at Prosperous, having first seduced a few of his men, whom he persuaded to leave with him during the night. This yeoman informer had been one of the party, but had changed his mind, and, escaping in the darkness, returned to his duty. The traitor Esmonde, the younger son of Sir Thomas Esmonde, the head of a well-known Catholic family of Wexford, practised as a physician, and was a lieutenant in the Clane town corps of yeomanry. No suspicion of his loyalty had ever before been entertained, and he had actually accompanied Captain Swayne on the previous Sunday to the chapel at Prosperous to exhort the people to surrender their arms.[2] Griffiths had not recovered from his astonishment at this news when Esmonde, who was

[1] Swayne was stabbed as he was springing from his bed. Froude, vol. iii. p. 361.

[2] Musgrave's "History of the Rebellion," vol. i. p. 288; and vol. ii. p. 303. Plowden, vol. ii. p. 698.

1798. May. missing when the force was first called together, appeared, and, joining the troop with his uniform and accoutrements quite clean, took up his usual position with a cool and unembarrassed composure. Griffiths was astounded, but allowed him to ride with the troops to Naas and there lodged him in the gaol, whence, ample proofs of his treachery being forthcoming, he was sent to Dublin, tried, and hanged.

The Government on May 24th issued another Proclamation, stating that orders had been issued to all the general officers commanding his Majesty's forces "to punish all persons acting, aiding, or in any manner assisting in the rebellion, which now exists within this kingdom, and has broken out in the most daring and violent attacks upon his Majesty's forces, according to martial law either by death or otherwise as to them shall seem right and expedient."[1]

This Proclamation merely made public the instructions and powers given privately to Abercromby on April 1st,[2] and which had been already acted upon at Naas and Clane. It was at once laid before the House of Commons and unanimously sanctioned. Other small conflicts took place on the first few days of the rebellion at Rathfarnam, Tallagh, Lucan, Lusk, Dunboyne, Barretstown, Baltinglass, and Kilcullen.[3] At Dunboyne and Barretstown the insurgents are admitted to have had the advantage, but in all the other encounters, although greatly superior in numbers, they were easily defeated. At Baltinglass, indeed, 100 rebels were killed without the loss of a single loyalist, but at Kilcullen the pikemen three times repelled the charge of a body of heavy cavalry under General Dundas.

Numerous houses were burnt and plundered, and several murders took place, while outrages on women were apparently extremely common.[4] It is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy to what extent these bar-

[1] *Annual Register*, 1798, part ii. p. 230.

[2] See *ante*, p. 114.

[3] Plowden, vol. ii. p. 695.

[4] Plowden thinks the troops were chiefly responsible for the barbarities, and "that infinitely more cold blood was shed, more property destroyed, more houses burned, and more women abused by the troops than by the insurgents." Vol. ii. p. 705.

barities were actually practised from the accounts of the times, but it is certain that the troops were not slow to use the powers now publicly given to them by the Executive and the House of Commons. Little or no quarter was meted out to those found armed, and many who were taken prisoners in the conflicts were afterwards shot or hanged without trial. In spite of the efforts of the Catholic bishops and the leading families of that persuasion, a religious element soon appeared in the contest which led to the plundering and murdering of Protestants by the Catholic rebels, who were told that the Government determined to exterminate them and that it was necessary to fight for their lives. 1798. May.

In Dublin the plan for attacking the castle and the Government was disconcerted by the arrest of the leaders, but on May 26th the Lord Mayor issued a caution warning the inhabitants to keep within their houses as much as possible after sunset, in order that the streets should be kept clear for the troops and artillery to act if it were necessary. M'Nally now warned the Government that there was a design to stop all the provisions for the city, and Magan assured them that the plot for seizing Dublin had by no means been abandoned.[1] Further precautions were therefore taken for defence: cannon were placed in position, yeomanry patrolled the streets at night, and the bridges were strongly guarded. The city was placed under martial law, the search for arms was prosecuted with the greatest vigilance, and courts-martial and hangings were of daily occurrence. All the loyal classes hastened to join the yeomanry; barristers, attorneys, bankers, merchants, shopkeepers, students, and even some clergymen being hastily enrolled. In fact, all the intelligence, strength, and wealth were on one side, and the ignorant, superstitious peasants on the other; but if savage fanaticism led by plausible agitators caused terrible excesses, the retribution was equally severe, and with almost as little regard for justice.

In Queen's County the rebellion opened on May 25th, with an attack on Monastrevan, which was garrisoned by 84 yeomen only, but after severe fighting the rebels were

[1] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 59.

1798. May. repulsed with great loss. They then proceeded towards Portarlington, but were met and dispersed by a small body of cavalry at Clonanna, leaving 20 dead. On the same day about 1500 rebels attacked the town of Carlow, but they were expected and entrapped. Without opposition they were permitted to march into an open space in the centre of the town, and were then suddenly received with a deadly fire by the garrison of 450 men. They at once attempted to retreat, but found they were surrounded, and a terrible scene followed. If they sought shelter in the cabins these were at once burnt, and when they issued from the flames they were relentlessly cut down. It was estimated that over 600 perished by bullet, fire, or hanging, and that eighty houses were burnt.[1]

This body of rebels had assembled on the lawn of Sir Edward Crosbie, who lived a mile and a half from the town, on the night before the attack. For not at once giving information to the authorities, he was tried by court-martial, sentenced, hanged, and decapitated; but no evidence was given to show that he was an United Irishman, and his chief crime appears to have been that he was a well-known Parliamentary reformer of the party of Grattan. He certainly did not join in the attack, and no evidence was given to show that he had any previous knowledge of the intention of the rebels to assemble on his lawn.[2]

On this bloody 25th of May a body of rebels was also routed at Hacketstown, in the same county, and next day another force was cut to pieces at Tarah, in Meath, by Lord Fingal and his Catholic yeomanry. The number of the rebels was here estimated to be 4000, of whom about 350 were killed, while the troops only lost 9 killed and 16 wounded out of a force of about 400 men. This action practically stopped the rebellion in Meath. In Kildare also, where it had been much more formidable, it was rapidly being suppressed, but not before several brutal murders had been committed in the village of Rathangan.

The feelings of the Government, House of Commons, and

[1] Plowden. Lecky, p. 65.

[2] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 66. Gordon also thought Crosbie was executed unjustly. "History of the Rebellion," p. 92.

loyalists had now been thoroughly roused, and, as is not unusual in warfare, the civilians at home were vehement in their demands for punishment, and wished for more severe measures than the generals in the field cared to carry out.[1] This was well shown when a large force of rebels offered to surrender to General Dundas at Kilcullen, provided they received a free pardon and were allowed to return home. Dundas transmitted this proposal to Camden with a recommendation that it should be accepted, but the Viceroy at once sent back orders for an unconditional surrender. In the meantime the general had granted a truce, and allowed the rebels to lay down their arms and disperse, 2000 of them joyously departing to their homes.[2] 1798. May.

The politicians in Dublin blamed Dundas for this act of clemency, just as they had cavilled at Abercromby for wishing to suppress military license; but it undoubtedly showed the humanity and political good sense of the general. Unfortunately a terrible tragedy was then enacted which completely counterbalanced the good effect on the rebels. Another large body of insurgents were assembled at Gibbetrath on the Curragh of Kildare, in order to surrender their arms to General Dundas. Sir James Duff, who had marched from Limerick with 600 men, proceeded with his force to receive the weapons, but a shot was fired from the rebel ranks by one of them, who foolishly had stated he would only give up his gun when it was empty. Immediately a deadly volley was poured into the rebels, who fled, pursued by Lord Jocelyn's fox-hunters, and before the officers could control their troops two or three hundred of the terrified throng were ruthlessly cut down.

All this time Ulster was astonishingly quiet considering that in the opinion of the rebels it was seething with

[1] Camden to Portland: "The feelings of the country are so exasperated as scarcely to be satisfied with anything short of extirpation."—Lecky, p. 69.

[2] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 69. Plowden says he received permission from the castle, but this is obviously an error. Vol. ii. p. 705.

Musgrave also says that Camden sanctioned the transaction, but that he was misinformed is proved by a letter in "Froude's History," vol. iii. p. 367, footnote.

It is worth recording that Froude considered Dundas as "an officer probably of the mode of thinking of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and believed that rebellion could be fondled into loyalty."—Ibid.

1798. May. insurrectionary forces. The Government, indeed, had been led to believe by the information of their secret agents that the rebellion would there attain to most serious proportions. On the other hand, it burst out in Wicklow, one of the most peaceful counties, but which had been worked into a state of rebellion by the emissaries of the United Irishmen, who spread the report that the yeomanry intended to destroy the whole Catholic population.[1]

Wexford, another prosperous county, but an important centre of Defenderism, had for some time been secretly arming, and such considerable disaffection arose among the yeomanry troops that it was necessary to disarm and disband a great part of them. Trees were cut down for the handles, and blacksmiths manufactured the heads of the pikes, while the people were incited to rebellion by the news that the Catholics were to be massacred. Some authorities state that the county was organised by the United Irish,[2] and some that the rebellion was "more a sudden gust of revenge than a preconcerted design."[3] The upper class Catholics here as elsewhere did their best to keep the people quiet, but Dr. Caulfield, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Wexford, collected the names of nine priests who joined the rebellion, and sent them to the Archbishop of Dublin. Most of these bore a bad character for drunkenness, and most were afterwards captured and executed.

On May 26th the insurrection was started at Boulavogue by Father John Murphy. A party of twenty yeomanry was at once sent to disperse the gathering of rebels, but it was unexpectedly attacked and defeated, Lieutenant Bookey, who commanded, being killed. The rebellion in this county immediately assumed a more religious character than in any other, and soon the houses of the Protestants were fired, while several inoffensive people were murdered. Many Catholic yeomen deserted to the rebels, who now took up their position on two hills called Oulart and Kilthomas, but were easily

[1] Plowden, vol. ii. p. 716.

[2] Lecky, on the authority of Miles Byrne, who took an active part in the Wexford Rebellion, vol. vii. p. 74.

[3] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 716. "In many instances they were headed by persons who never had been members of the association of United Irishmen." Hay, the Catholic historian, attributes the rebellion to the harshness with which the southern counties were disarmed.

dislodged from the latter by a party of 250 yeomen, who killed about that number of insurgents, and burnt over one hundred cabins. The force on the hill at Oulart, led by Father John Murphy, was much more formidable, numbering about 4000 men, and these a body of 110 of the North Cork Militia, under the command of Colonel Foote, recklessly proceeded to attack. The troops were at first so successful that the rebels broke and fled, but they were speedily rallied by Murphy, and charged the troops with such effect that they killed them all but five. This action was fought on Whitsunday, May 27th, and the effect was electrical, the whole county rising at once in arms.[1] 1798. May.

Father John pursued this success with vigour, and early the next day occupied the town of Camolin, and then pushed on for Enniscorthy with 6000 men. This town was also attacked and captured on the 28th after a desperate defence by 300 infantry and some yeomen, who fought until their ammunition was exhausted, when they were obliged to retreat to Wexford, eleven miles away, after losing three officers and over eighty men.[2] Here the greatest alarm prevailed, and fears of massacre affected every mind. An attempt was therefore made to enter into negotiations with the rebels, who had now formed their camp on the summit of Vinegar Hill, a rocky eminence near to Enniscorthy. Three country gentlemen, named Bagenal Harvey, John Colclough, and Edward Fitzgerald, who had been arrested on suspicion of sympathy with the rebellion, and cast into prison at Wexford, were therefore approached with the view of requesting them to go to Vinegar Hill to speak with the rebels. Colclough and Fitzgerald consented, and visited the camp, but not being able to persuade the insurgents to disperse, the latter decided to stop with them and was elected one of their chiefs. The defence of Wexford was at once strengthened by the acquisition of 200 Donegal militia and a 6-pounder, which raised the loyal force to a total of 1200 men. The rebels were now divided in opinion as to their next move, but after discussing the advantages of marching upon New Ross and Newtown

[1] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 83. Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 718.
[2] Ibid., p. 85. Ibid., p. 719.

1798. May. Barry, finally decided to attack Wexford. On the night of the 29th, therefore, they advanced, led by Murphy, Fitzgerald, Roach, and John Hay.[1]

Meanwhile General Fawcett had left Duncannon Fort on the same evening, and on the 30th sent on 88 men with two howitzers, but as they passed a place called Three Rocks, within a few miles of Wexford, they were surprised and all killed except 1 officer and 16 men, the two cannon being captured. The Wexford garrison on the same day also advanced to the Three Rocks, hoping to defeat the rebels, but found them in force to the number of 16,000, and after leaving Colonel Watson dead, retreated to the town.[2] As resistance now seemed hopeless, it was decided to surrender the town, Bagenal Harvey being commissioned to treat with the insurgents, but before he could arrange terms of capitulation the whole of the troops fled, leaving the inhabitants to the mercy of the rebels. Fortunately the disturbances were very slight, for Bagenal Harvey, who was a Protestant landlord, was at once made Commander-in-Chief, and restrained effectually the excesses of his irregular troops. The main body of the rebels under his command continued their march on the next day, leaving in the town a force under Captain Keugh, an ex-officer in the English army, who seems to have maintained excellent order, and organised some good defences.

1798. June. Victory, however, was by no means confined to the side of the insurgents, for on June 1st Colonel L'Estrange, with only about 350 men, met the rebels, led by a priest named Kearns, at Newtown Barry, and scattered them with a fire of grape-shot, killing several hundreds.[3] The success at Wexford, nevertheless, speedily attracted the rebels from all sides, and a considerable number still remained at Vinegar Hill, where they were encamped from May 28th until June 20th, and where they committed the most terrible atrocities in the whole of Irish history.[4] With a savage fanaticism born of religious prejudice and fear of extermination, the Catholic

[1] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 721. Lecky, vol. viii. p. 87.

[2] Ibid., p. 722. Ibid., p. 88.

[3] Ibid., p. 727. Ibid., p. 97.

[4] Ibid., p. 102. Musgrave estimates the number of murdered as 500, and Gordon as 400, but no one questions the truth of the atrocities.

rebels butchered all the Protestants they could discover in the neighbourhood unless they at once conformed. But the main object of the Wexford rebels was to open up communication with other parts of the country, and for this purpose they wished to capture Gorey and New Ross. In this they were unsuccessful, being met near the former place by Lieutenant Elliot with a force of yeomanry and militia and completely routed. Nevertheless, they again returned to the attack with a greatly augmented force, and on June 4th commenced their march on Gorey on the same day that General Loftus and Colonel Walpole had left that place to attack Bagenal Harvey, who had now camped at Corrigrua Hill.[1] With foolish carelessness no scouts appear to have been thrown out, with the result that Walpole's troops were suddenly assailed on the march by Father Murphy and a powerful rebel force. These could not be dispersed even by a heavy fire of grape, and after Walpole had been shot dead the troops fled in disorder to Gorey, and then on to Arklow, leaving three cannon and 54 men killed or missing; among the officers here wounded was Captain Armstrong, the accuser of the Sheares.[2] Loftus meanwhile, who was advancing by another road, had heard the noise of battle and hastened to help Walpole, but arrived too late, and was himself forced to retreat to Carlow. The loyalist inhabitants of Gorey, terrified by the flight of the soldiers through their town, now themselves fled from their homes, leaving all their property behind. 1798. June.

While the rebels were thus successful at Gorey, Bagenal Harvey attempted to take New Ross, for which purpose he advanced on the 4th to Corbet Hill, a mile from that town. Next day, being willing to save bloodshed, he sent a summons to General Johnston, who was in command of 1400 men guarding the town, and requested him to surrender.[3] Unfortunately, the man bearing this message, under a flag of truce, was shot, and the insurgents, infuriated at this treatment of their envoy, advanced at daybreak to the attack, using the efficacious old-fashioned stratagem of

[1] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 728.
[2] Ibid. Lecky, vol. viii. p. 106.
[3] Ibid., p. 730. Ibid., p. 107.

1798. June. driving before them a number of cattle to break the ranks of the troops. The battle raged furiously all day; at one time the rebels overpowered the artillery and captured their guns; Lord Mountjoy, then at the head of the Dublin County Regiment, boldly charged them, but was unable to break the ranks of the pikemen, and fell in the struggle.[1] At this time, indeed, it seemed as if the town were lost, and some of the troops fled to Waterford; but General Johnston succeeded in rallying the remainder, and having once more charged the rebels, after some desperate fighting the guns were retaken and turned against them. For twelve hours the most terrible carnage took place, but at last the insurgents broke and fled through the streets of burning and falling houses choked with the bodies of the slain, the loss of the rebels being estimated at about 2000, and that of the loyalists at 230 men.[2] After this defeat Bagenal Harvey was deposed from his office as Commander-in-Chief of the rebels, and was succeeded by Father Philip Roche. It is curious to note that while he was anxious to spare the lives of the loyalist prisoners, he gave orders that no mercy was to be extended to the rebels who shirked their duty.[3]

While the battle of New Ross was raging, a most inhuman and barbarous massacre of Protestant prisoners took place at Scullabogue barn. The number of the slain varies according to the religion of the historian, the Protestants making it to be 224, and the Catholics 80 to 100.[4] Many of them were dragged out and shot or piked, but many were

[1] Colonel Crawford, writing from New Ross on June 9th, stated that he had a contemptible opinion of the rebels before the action, but afterwards, "I never saw any troops attack with more enthusiasm and bravery than the rebels did on the 5th. We must proceed against them with caution as well as vigour, and with a much larger force," S. P. O. From "Froude's History," vol. iii. p. 408.

[2] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 3. Froude, vol. iii. p. 411.

[3] In his last General Order, dated June 6, 1798, he ordered that guards should be sent to certain baronies to force all the United men loitering at home to join, and if any resistance was offered, those offering it should be liable to be put to death. "It is also resolved that any person or persons who shall take upon him or them to kill or murder any person or prisoner, burn any house, or commit any plunder without especial written order from the Commander-in-Chief shall suffer death."—Plowden, vol. ii. p. 735.

[4] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 3. Plowden thinks the barbarous act was committed by some runaway rebels from the assault on Ross. Vol. ii. part ii. p. 733.

burnt alive in the barn, being thrust back into the flames when they attempted to escape. This damnable piece of ferocious cruelty is by far the worst that occurred during the whole rebellion, and well illustrates that even the commonest instincts of humanity may be entirely absent in human beings when infuriated by that worst of all forms of mania, religious fanaticism. 1798. June.

The Irish Government were now becoming alarmed. Commencing the war against the insurgents with the same easy confidence that the Powers had attacked the republicans of France six years before, they were now beginning to learn that untrained and undisciplined peasants, when actuated by a passion for a cause, are not to be despised as a force pitted against regular troops. Camden complained to Pelham of the want of discipline in the army, and the general impression was gaining ground, that if the French succeeded in landing 5000 men the result would be very doubtful. The Viceroy, indeed, on June 5th, before he had heard the result of the battle of New Ross, was so alarmed that he wrote to the Duke of Portland asking for at least 10,000 men.[1] He also suggested that Lake was not a man of sufficient ability or authority, and recommended that the office of Commander-in-Chief and Lord Lieutenant should be merged into one. This idea had been entertained by Lord Cornwallis for some months, and as early as March 31st he had been asked by Lord Spencer to take the double appointment, but it was not until the end of May that Pitt also pressed him to accept the difficult task.[2]

Castlereagh took an equally grave view of the situation, and wrote to Pelham: "The rebellion in Wexford has assumed a more serious shape than was to be apprehended from a peasantry, however well organised.[3]

Fortunately the French did not arrive at this time, and the North, in which the rebels had placed their trust, was still passive, undoubtedly due chiefly to the rigorous disarmament that had been carried out. The cool, calculating

[1] Camden to Portland, June 5, 1798. Lecky, vol. viii. p. 114.

[2] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 351 *et seq.*

[3] After the rebellion £1,230,000 was claimed as compensation for the property of loyalists destroyed, and a large part of this sum was paid by a vote of the Irish Parliament. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 349.

1798. June. spirit of the commercial Presbyterians of the North was also very different to the emotional temperament of the Irish Catholics. They were not affected with a strong religious animosity against the established Government, and were unwilling to throw in their lot with an ignorant rabble who, however successful in fighting the troops, were very unlikely successfully to institute a republic, for which alone they were prepared to fight, and then only with the aid of the French.

The excesses of the Catholic insurgents and the cold-blooded butchery of Protestants indeed horrified and disgusted the Presbyterians, who began to flock into the ranks of the yeomanry, so that all chance of a great outbreak from that quarter had passed. Nevertheless, on June 7th, an attack was made on the town of Antrim by a force of rebels led by a Belfast cotton manufacturer named M'Cracken, one of the original founders of the United Irish Society. As usual, the Government received information, and Colonel Lumley with two or three troops of dragoons and a large body of yeomanry, after a desperate fight, drove them out of the town.[1] Six days later a large body of rebels under Henry Monroe was defeated after a desperate engagement at Ballinahinch, the estate of Lord Moira, in which they lost four or five hundred of their number. General Nugent was here in command of the troops, numbering about 1500, with eight cannon, who fought with the greatest ferocity, giving no quarter and burning the town to the ground.[2] After the battle the general issued a Proclamation offering pardon and protection to all rebels except the leaders, but threatening, if submission was not made, to burn the towns of Killinchy, Killileagh, Ballinahinch, Saintfield, and every cottage and farmhouse round about, to carry off all the cattle, and to put every one to the sword who was found in arms.[3] This firm attitude put an end to the rising in Ulster. Monroe was arrested and hanged, and his head being severed from his body, it

[1] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 129. Froude, vol. iii. p. 426.

[2] Plowden, vol ii. part ii. p. 769. Froude states, "A hundred men fighting against a thousand cannot afford to make prisoners. Those who find no quarter give no quarter."—Vol. iii. p. 428.

[3] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 134.

was, in accordance with the custom of the time, fixed on a spike in the market-place of Lisburn. 1798. June.

Meanwhile in Wexford the insurrection was far from being quelled, in spite of the defeat of the rebels at New Ross, and after Roche had assumed the command Harvey went back to Wexford and assisted Keugh in governing and defending the town. On the 10th they moved their camp to Lacken Hill, and here very good order appears to have been kept and no murders committed. But the tide of warfare had now commenced to flow in favour of the troops, and at Arklow a great host of rebels was defeated by General Needham, after a desperate struggle lasting the whole day.[1] Nevertheless the Government were now thoroughly alarmed, and Camden wrote again to Pelham, "Unless Great Britain pours an immense force into Ireland the country is lost; unless she sends her most able generals those troops may be sacrificed."[2] Castlereagh also wrote in the same strain, and pointed out that the rebellion had now lost its original character and had become a religious war.[3] M'Nally thoroughly agreed with this, and stated that many who were zealous as United Irishmen were shocked at the present appearance of the country and wished sincerely for peace. The informer at this time, indeed, seems to have been one of the few men who had not completely lost their sense of proportion and gave the Government particularly good advice respecting the necessity of clemency.

At length on June 16th the long-expected troops from England landed at Waterford, and soon after many English militia regiments volunteered for service in Ireland. After violent opposition in Parliament[4] an Act was passed which enabled the King to accept their offer, and 12,000 of them arrived before the end of June. After the defeat of Arklow

[1] The rebels were under Father Michael Murphy, who showed the most reckless courage and contempt of death until at length a round shot caught him and his horse. A good account of this engagement is in Froude's "English in Ireland," vol. iii. p. 422.

[2] Camden to Pelham, June 11, 1798.

[3] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 219.

[4] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 1500. The chief opposition was on the grounds that the action would be unconstitutional. This line was taken by Sheridan, Tierney, and also by Wilberforce, who, however, supported the motion because it was indispensably necessary.

1798. June. the rebels evacuated Gorey and the whole of the neighbouring country and retired to Vinegar Hill, and on the 19th the force under Father Roche near New Ross was compelled to retreat, part of it proceeding to Vinegar Hill, while the other and larger portion made its way to the Three Rocks near Wexford. On June 21st Vinegar Hill was attacked by a large force under General Lake, in which the troops of Generals Johnston and Dundas especially distinguished themselves, and the rebels, seeing they were being surrounded, broke and fled to Wexford. Enniscorthy was next taken, where the troops appear to have behaved in a most barbarous fashion, even the hospital, either accidentally or on purpose, according to the bias of the historian, being set on fire and all inside burnt to death.[1]

Wexford had been governed in an excellent manner, considering the character of the rebels who daily flocked into the town, by Keugh and Harvey. The Protestants who had excited suspicion were kept under a strong guard, while many others saved themselves from murder by attending the Catholic services. Among the prisoners who had early been taken by the rebels was Lord Kingsborough, who had commanded the North Cork Militia, a regiment particularly distasteful to the people, and it was only by the greatest exertions of the principal inhabitants that he was saved from a violent death.

But the end was approaching. English war ships appeared and the harbour was blocked, while from the land came news of the failure of the rebellion and of the march of General Moore, who was hastening to join in the attack on Vinegar Hill. On the 20th of June the greater part of the rebel army therefore left the town to join Roche's encampment on the Three Rocks, and that afternoon they met and attacked Moore's troops at a place called Goffsbridge, but were beaten.

[1] Lake to Castlereagh, June 21st: "The troops behaved excessively well in action, but their determination to destroy every one they think a rebel is beyond description and wants much correction." To which Castlereagh replied: "I consider the rebels as now in your power, and I feel assured that your treatment of them will be such as shall make them sensible of their crimes as well as of the authority of Government."—"Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 223.

On the same day occurred the massacre of Wexford Bridge, when most of the rebel troops were out of the town. One of their captains, named Thomas Dixon, a skipper of a merchant vessel in the bay and the most violent of any of the rebel leaders, refused to leave the town with the main party of armed rebels, and instead, aided by a drunken mob, took possession of the gaol and market house. He then brought out the prisoners to be murdered, and standing them in rows on the bridge the pikemen pierced them one by one and lifting their bodies into the air threw them over the parapet into the river. Fortunately, before this terrible tragedy had been ended by the death of all the prisoners, Edward Roche galloped into the town, stating that Vinegar Hill was attacked and that every man was needed.[1] 1798. June.

It now became evident that Wexford could not be defended against the troops, and Keugh and the leading inhabitants decided to offer to surrender. Lord Kingsborough was placed in chief command of the place, the Mayor, Dr. Jacob, was restored to his functions, and Captain M'Manus, a liberated prisoner, was sent to meet General Moore with an offer to surrender "and return to their allegiance, provided their persons and property were guaranteed by the commanding officer." Lord Kingsborough also wrote strongly urging that the offer of capitulation should be accepted, and stating that he had promised the rebels the terms would be agreed to.

Moore forwarded the letters to General Lake, who bluntly refused to attend "to any terms offered by rebels in arms against their sovereign," but this answer did not reach Wexford until after the surrender had been accomplished. Up to the very end Keugh kept excellent order in the town in spite of the crowds of infuriated rebels who rushed in from Vinegar Hill, and Moore, wishing to save the town from destruction and the inhabitants from massacre, halted his force outside the town,[2] but Captain Boyd, who was its Member, entered with a small party of yeomen and Queen's Royals and took possession.

[1] Hay, an eye-witness, puts the number massacred at thirty-five. See Plowden, vol. ii. p. 754.

[2] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 763. Froude, vol. iii. p. 447.

1798. June. Lake at once began a system of rigorous punishments, and Father Philip Roche, Keugh, and a feeble imbecile old gentleman named Grogan, whose chief sin was that he had been once upon a time an Opposition Member of Parliament, were at once hanged and decapitated. Bagenal Harvey, John Colclough, and sixty-five other persons were hanged, but the one real scoundrel for whom nothing can be urged, Dixon, appears to have escaped and was never heard of again.

In England the measures to suppress the rebellion were supported or opposed entirely according to the rules of party politics, but the debates are not preserved for the reason that all strangers were excluded from the gallery[1] on June 14th, when Mr. Sheridan moved for a Committee on the State of Ireland. He was supported by Mr. Tierney, Mr. W. Smith, Dr. Laurence, and Generals Tarleton and Fitzpatrick, but opposed by Mr. Secretary Dundas, Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Canning, and Mr. Windham, and on a division the motion was rejected by 159 to 43. Mr. Sheridan then moved for a change of Ministers, but this was also negatived without a division.[2] In the House of Lords a motion was brought forward on the next day by the Duke of Leinster, praying that his Majesty should "direct the proper officer to lay before the House a full and ample statement of the facts and circumstances which have led to this disastrous state of affairs." He was supported by the Dukes of Norfolk, Bedford, Devonshire, and Leeds, and Earls Moira and Suffolk, and was opposed by Earl Spencer, Lord Grenville, and the Lord Chancellor, the motion being negatived by 70 to 18.[3] On June 22nd Mr. Fox moved that an immediate stop should be put to the scourging and other tortures which had been employed for the purpose of extorting confession, and a few days later a similar motion was brought before the Lords by the Duke of Bedford, but both were rejected.[4]

The appointment of Lord Cornwallis to the double post of Lord Lieutenant and Commander-in-Chief took place on June 30th, so that by the time he arrived in Ireland the

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 1487.
[2] Ibid., p. 1489.
[3] Ibid., p. 1491.
[4] Ibid., pp. 1516–1518.

insurrection was virtually suppressed. The leaders who had most influence and control over the rebels were the priests who joined the rebellion, and of these Father Roche had been hanged, Father Michael Murphy had fallen at Arklow, Father Kearns was now in hiding, but Father John Murphy was still with the main body of rebels at Three Rocks. 1798. June.

The policy of Cornwallis was exactly opposite to that adopted by Camden, and he first attempted to suppress the license of the military, and then to show clemency to the rebels.[1] It is impossible to say how far these measures would have been successful if adopted at the beginning of the insurrection, but there can be no doubt that the rigorous system of disarmament was the chief reason why the North remained comparatively quiet, and that if the rebellion had broken out there it would have been far better organised, for the insurgents would have been led by more competent officers. On the other hand, the excesses of the military seem to have been the chief cause affecting the conversion of the movement from a political republican rebellion into a religious civil war, carried on with savage fanaticism, the rebels being led by priests with little knowledge of military matters. It is therefore doubtful if the latter condition of affairs, although attended by the most atrocious crimes, was really more difficult to deal with than the former would have been if allowed to develop.

The chief mistakes of Camden's Government have often before and since been made by English Administrations. In the first place, they underrated the magnitude of the rebellion and the strength of the rebels; in the second, they trusted that a comparatively few half-trained troops would be able to overcome with ease great bodies of partly-armed peasants; and, in the third, they endeavoured to shift the

[1] Cornwallis to Portland, June 28, 1798: "The accounts that you see of the number of the enemy destroyed in every action are, I conclude, greatly exaggerated; from my own knowledge of military affairs I am sure that a very small portion of them only could be killed in battle, and I am much afraid that any man in a brown coat who is found within several miles of the field of action is butchered without discrimination." He then announces his intention to instruct the general officer to grant permission to "the deluded wretches who are still wandering about in considerable bodies" to return home, after delivering up their arms, and taking the oath of allegiance. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 357.

1798. June. responsibility from themselves to the Commander-in-Chief of the forces. It is so usual for the Government to begin a war with an insufficient number of troops and then at the last moment hastily to send out more, after the first detachments have either been cut to pieces or invested in some town, that it seems part of the system on which we work. The reasons for this method seem to be the necessity of impressing the world that we are never the aggressors, and so are always in an unprepared state; and secondly of proving to the tax-payer that he is never asked for money until it is absolutely necessary. It is an expensive system really in the long run, although it may for the moment succeed in silencing adverse criticism. If the Irish Government, who had the advantage of receiving more secret information, probably, than has ever been given before in any insurrection, had asked for half-a-dozen good disciplined regiments from England, and had then systematically disarmed the country, the rebellion would never have developed into a religious contest, and would indeed probably never have occurred at all.

Again, it was manifestly not only illegal, but extremely bad policy to give the Commander-in-Chief absolute power of life and death after the Proclamation of March 30th, before the rebellion had broken out, even if it had been necessary to place certain districts under martial law. While the country was peaceful no one ought to have been put to death unless sentenced by a properly-constituted civil court. It should have been apparent to the Government that the discipline of the yeomanry and militia was not sufficiently good to entrust them with such extreme powers, nor is it the function of any military authority to administer justice in times of peace, but only to enforce the decision of the civil arm by troops when the civil forces are not strong enough. In thus relieving themselves of responsibility, and throwing the burden of it on to the shoulders of the military, the Government of Camden showed the greatest weakness. The military are not indeed so much to blame for the excesses committed as those who put them in a position to commit them. The soldiers of the King looked upon every one actively opposed to the Government of the King as

a rebel, and their idea of justice was to murder him, burn his house, and defile his wife or daughter. The officers had little or no control over their men, and the Government did nothing to control the officers, and so the result was a licentious army, burning with an unrestrained and irrational form of loyalty, contending with a mob infuriated with desire for revenge, and led by fanatical priests. 1798. June.

The main body of the rebels who were left were now with Father John Murphy on the Three Rocks Mountain. Seeing that the rebellion in Wexford was over, he marched into Kilkenny with the hope of raising the county, but received no sympathy there, and on June 26th, Sir Charles Asgill at the head of 1100 men attacked the rebel force on Kilcomney Hill, and put it to flight.[1] Father Murphy was either killed early in the battle, or was hanged by some yeomen at Tullow. The troops were accused of behaving in a most barbarous manner after this action, killing even women and children in cold blood. Meanwhile, in the neighbourhood of the town of Gorey, a small party of yeomanry cavalry scoured the country in search of rebels, and killed about fifty, but this act was followed by a terrible vengeance; the rebels, to the number of 500, under the command of a gentleman named Perry, attacked Gorey, and slaughtered thirty-seven men who were attempting to escape to Arklow. Another larger party penetrated into Wicklow, and on June 25th attacked Hacketstown, which was defended by Captain Hardy and a small force of 200 men. The most bloody conflict then took place, lasting for nine hours, amidst the burning town, after which the assailants were beaten back.[2] The rebels next attacked Carnew but were again repulsed, and after this the small bodies remaining were hunted down and dispersed. Most of the leaders were now either captured or killed, and of the remainder Father Kearns and Perry were both executed, and Esmond Ryan, who commanded the artillery at Arklow, shared the same fate.

One of the earliest orders of Lord Cornwallis was that no sentence of a court-martial should be carried out until the evidence had been sent to Dublin, which showed that the

[1] Plowden, vol. ii. p. 771.

[2] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 771.

1798. July. new Viceroy intended to rule in fact as well as in name; but still large numbers of rebels were tried, condemned, and executed, and 418 persons were banished or transported by sentences of courts-martial during the next nine months.[1] On July 3rd a Proclamation was inserted in the *Dublin Gazette*, authorising the generals to protect such of the insurgents as, having been guilty of simple rebellion, surrendered their arms, deserted their leaders, and took the oath of allegiance, and on the 17th an Act of Amnesty was passed by Parliament in favour of all rebels with a few specified exceptions who complied with these conditions. The conduct of Cornwallis, indeed, seems to have been actuated both by a desire to suppress the excesses of the military and to show justice to the rebels. But he was also very anxious to prove to the world that the severe measures of the former administration were unavoidable. The reader must remember that although he has been all the time behind the scenes the members of Parliament, both in England and Ireland, and the public knew nothing of the information in the possession of the Executive. It was therefore decided to publish a report, drawn up by a Secret Committee of the House of Commons in which Cornwallis was anxious that the correspondence with France should be included, but Portland was unwilling that M'Nevin's "Memoir" should be published in full.[2]

At this time a High Commission was appointed to try the leaders of the rebellion, and the brothers Sheares were placed in the dock on July 12th, the judges being Lord Carleton, Mr. Crookshank, Mr. Baron Smith, Mr. Baron George, and Mr. Justice Day.

The counsel for the Crown were the Solicitor-General, Mr. John Toler, Mr. James Fitzgerald, Mr. Saurin, Mr. O'Grady; and for the defence, Mr. Curran, Mr. Plunkett, and Mr.

[1] Castlereagh to Wickham, March 6, 1799. Lecky, vol. viii. p. 253.

[2] Cornwallis to Portland, July 15, 1798: "It would greatly strengthen our cause if we could venture to allow the whole or any part of the correspondence with France to be published in the Report of the Secret Committee." Portland does not agree that the whole should be published, but agrees that the M'Nevin "Memoirs" should be submitted to the Committee on the condition that they are accepted on the Lord Lieutenant's word, and that no attempt must be made to authenticate them. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 365.

M'Nally.[1] The defence was most ably conducted, and no point was omitted. A grand juror of the name of John Decluzean, who was stated to be an alien, was objected to, but the Crown replied that the person named had been naturalised, and the case proceeded. After the opening speech of Mr. Toler, in which he related the history of the conference between Captain Armstrong and the Sheares, Armstrong was called as a witness, and Mr. Curran, protesting that he did not ask the question to disturb the witness, inquired if he believed in God, to which Armstrong replied, "I do."[2] He was then sworn and gave his testimony of the events related above. The Proclamation was next read, and further evidence relating to the arrest. Mr. Ponsonby then argued most ably for the defence on the meaning of the two species of treason with which the prisoner was charged, first, "for compassing and imagining the death of the King; and, secondly, for adhering to his enemies," and showed that there was no evidence to prove either charge; but Lord Carleton in summing up pointed out that the highest authorities have regarded treason to be "forming conspiracies to usurp by force and in defiance of the authority of Parliament the Government of the Kingdom, to destroy its constitution, and in so doing to destroy the monarchy."[3] 1798. July.

The judge then proceeded to sum up the evidence, which occupied the whole night, and at nearly 8 A.M. the verdict of Guilty was returned. Great efforts were made to save the prisoners, and they themselves begged for mercy, but the Lord Lieutenant refused their petition, and on July 14th they were hanged and afterwards beheaded. The Irish rebels, taken as a whole, do not seem to have been men of practical knowledge or strength, but these two unfortunate brothers were undoubtedly the weakest of them all. Henry was indeed a pitiable coward, and the character of his

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 256.

[2] The cross-examination of Armstrong is an excellent example of the methods pursued by the barristers at this time. The most ridiculous questions were asked him, *e.g.*, "Did you ever say that if no other person could be found to cut off the head of the King of England you would do it yourself?" Answer, "Never!" Ibid., p. 319.

[3] "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 387.

1798. July. literary effusions shows that a desire to create an effect far more dominated his mind than any wish to see his precepts literally carried out. They were certainly not of the stuff heroes are made from, and they can only excite the pity which ought to be meted to any unfortunate individuals whose minds develop in a direction opposed to all sense of order, and lead them into active conflict with the condition of society which, however faulty, cannot be successfully revolutionised by a blow, but only by slow and prolonged efforts. They do not seem to have inspired much confidence in their brother rebels, and neither M'Nally nor Emmet were either aware of, or approved the extreme measures which they advised in the Proclamation.

The trials of John M'Cann, Michael Byrne, and Oliver Bond soon followed. All these were convicted and sentenced to death on the information of Reynolds, who now freely gave evidence in public. In these trials also the tactics of the counsels for the defence were first to endeavour to shake the credit of the witnesses and then to argue on the meaning of treason.[1]

The Report of the Secret Committee was presented to the House of Commons by Lord Castlereagh on July 17, 1798. It begins by stating the history of the formation of the United Irishmen and their development into a military organisation. It then deals with the corresponding formation of the yeomanry forces on the part of the Government, and points out that they totalled 50,000 men during the rebellion. The story of the mission to France of Dr. M'Nevin is stated, and the history of the plot to seize Dublin. The witnesses called on oath were Dr. M'Nevin, who related the various communications with the French Government, and that a "Memoir" was given to the French Minister at Hamburg upon the affairs of the nation which stated that "Lough Foyle would be a proper place for landing, as the garrison of Derry was weak." It further recommended that the "Irish seamen prisoners of war should be separated from the English in order to induce them to join in the expedition," and that "the French should, on landing, publish a Proclamation that they came as allies to deliver, and not as enemies to conquer

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxvii. p. 521.

Ireland, and it was urged that in the negotiations at Lisle France should insist upon the independence of Ireland as a preliminary article.[1] Arthur O'Connor gave practically the same evidence, and Samuel Neilson and Thomas Addie Emmet also corroborated it. 1798. July.

Of the rebels M'Cann, Byrne, and Bond, who were all sentenced to death, the first named only was executed by hanging on July 19th, but the other two were to be similarly treated on July 25th, and the following day. It was natural that the other prisoners should endeavour to save their necks by the usual means, and they now offered to make a full confession if their lives were spared. Both Cornwallis and Castlereagh were anxious to accept this offer, but they were not supported by the rest of the Government, and Byrne was executed.[2] This produced a second application to the Government, and Lord Clare, the Chancellor, strongly recommended its acceptance, so, in spite of the Opposition of the Speaker, Sir John Parnell, and the general sentiment of Dublin, the offer was accepted. No doubt considerations of policy as well as clemency affected the Government in coming to this decision. It was essentially important to obtain the fullest evidence of the conspiracy, and, besides, it would have been impossible to bring forward in public enough evidence to convict many of the prisoners.[3] The loyalist public were very annoyed at this decision, and were in favour of severe measures being meted out to the rebels, but the Government remained firm in its conciliatory attitude, and resisted the popular wish. Emmet, M'Nevin, and O'Connor now agreed to give the fullest evidence on condition they should ultimately be released and go into banishment, and that Bond should be similarly treated. A memorial was there-

[1] *Annual Register*, 1798, part ii. pp. 158–170. All through the rebels seemed anxious to impress the French Directory that they only required their help in order to establish their independence, and were by no means desirous that Ireland should become a French possession.

[2] Cornwallis to Portland, July 26, 1798. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 372.

[3] Edward Cooke to William Wickham, July 28, 1798: "We get rid of seventy prisoners, many of the most important of whom we could not try, and who could not be disposed of without doing such a violence to the principles of law and evidence as could not be justified."—"Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 378.

1798. July. fore drawn up by the three leading United Irishmen, which stated, with accuracy, the various stages in the formation of the Society, and the causes which led to the Rebellion.[1] It was, however, not considered advisable to publish this, as sufficient evidence had already been made public in the Report of the Secret Committee.

The loyalists were still thirsting for revenge, and at this time John Claudius Beresford wished to bring in a Bill to confiscate the property of men convicted of high treason before a court-martial, but Castlereagh opposed the motion, stating that the power to do so was already possessed by the Government. Instead, a Bill of Attainder was introduced, confiscating the property of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Bagenal Harvey, and Cornelius Grogan, but before the Bill had received the royal assent the alarming intelligence reached Dublin that the French had landed at Killala Bay.

[1] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 353–372.

CHAPTER VIII

Congress of Rastadt—Excessive demands of the French—French attack on Switzerland — Formation of Helvetic Republic — A new coalition — Surrender of Malta to Bonaparte—Battle of the Nile—Nelson at Naples—Treaty between England and Naples—Mack reaches Rome—Defeat of Neapolitan troops by the French—Political system of Naples—Attitude of Fox and the Whigs—New system of raising revenue—Irish refugees in Paris—Turner and Talleyrand—Expedition of Humbert—French land at Killala—Retreat of English troops—Arrest of Irish at Hamburg—Last French expedition to Ireland—Capture, trial, and suicide of Wolfe Tone.

After Prussia and Austria had each signed an agreement abandoning the Rhenish Provinces, the conditions of peace were referred to a Congress which assembled at Rastadt. This consisted of two French envoys,[1] of the representatives of Prussia and Austria, and of a committee appointed by the Diet of Rastadt. Besides these official negotiators every petty German state or community sent an agent with the hope of picking up some crumbs after the giants had feasted. No one seemed much distressed by the idea of the dismemberment of the German Empire, and the Committee having acquired full powers, proceeded cheerfully to discuss the cession of the Rhenish Provinces, which had now for some weeks been subject to the laws and taxation of France. At length the question arose of compensation for the dispossessed lay Princes, and the French then proposed to disestablish and secularise the German ecclesiastical States. Prussia supported this suggestion, but the Emperor opposed the attack upon his faithful Catholic dependents, and the Ecclesiastical Princes themselves strongly objected to being vivisected.[2] Nevertheless the principle was adopted without much difficulty. The insatiable French then suddenly demanded that they should be given the fortresses of Kehl 1797.

[1] Bonsier and Treilhard.

[2] Fyffe's "History of Modern Europe," vol. i. p. 157. Thiers states that Austria also voted that the dispossessed Princes should be indemnified from the ecclesiastical States, but that she wished to retain some bishoprics herself.—Tome ix. p. 369.

1797. and Castel upon the German side of the Rhine, arguing that Strasburg and Mainz were of no service so long as they were commanded by the guns on the opposite bank.[1] France had now overstepped the limit, and Austria began to realise that the Bavarian annexations, promised to her by the secret articles of Campo Formio, would be withheld. She was also suspicious that Prussia was inclining to an alliance with the Republic, and, to complete the unedifying circle of mistrust, Prussia doubted the Emperor's good faith, and feared that the cessions to which he had already agreed were very extensive.[2] As a matter of fact, Thugut was seeking expansion, not arranging for cessions, and when he became convinced that France would not permit Austria to extend her territory in Italy he determined upon a renewal of the war, in spite of a powerful opposition at Court.

1797. December. While the statesmen were thus engaged a French force entered the Bishopric of Basle on December 15, 1797, and stirred up the people in the Pays de Vaud to rise against their Government, which was carried on in a just and temperate way by an officer from Berne, but was not controlled by a democratic body. Switzerland at this time was a Republic, consisting of ruling cantons and subject dependencies, all of which were governed by a few families; the people being, to a great extent, excluded from political rights. It was therefore the intention of the French to incite the unenfranchised to rebellion, and in this they were successful, democratic movements at once starting in the northern and western cantons.[3] The Senate of Berne acted promptly and called out the Federal army, while the Diet

[1] Wolfgang Menzel states: "The avarice manifested by the French throughout the whole of the negotiations, was only surpassed by the brutality of their language and behaviour."—"History of Germany by Menzel," translated by Mrs. George Horrocks, vol. iii. p. 203.

[2] From Elgin to Grenville, December 24, 1797, Berlin: "Accounts from Rastadt are very unfavourable. The Austrian Ministers and plenipotentiaries offer no consolitary hope, and do not conceal their expectation of great changes in the Germanic dominions, while French troops advancing in force on this side of the Rhine increase the apprehensions and doubts of the extent of the cessions agreed to by the Emperor."—F. O. Records, Prussia, 46.

[3] Thiers gives the French version as follows: "La France, Appelée par le peuple dont elle était garante, le couvrait de ses troupes et menaçait d'employer la force si l'on commettait contre lui la moindre violence."—Tome ix. p. 396.

of the Confederacy voted supplies, but at the same time endeavoured to negotiate with the invaders. Compromise was however impossible, for it soon became apparent that the French intended to obliterate entirely the present system. There was therefore no choice but to commence hostilities, and after a brave resistance the Swiss troops were overcome, the French entering the Capital on March 6, 1798. Here they at once annexed the Treasure of Berne, £800,000, which had been accumulated by years of thrift and good management, and in return for this robbery the Swiss were given a new constitution on the French model, and were proclaimed as the Helvetic Republic.[1] At the same time the French Ambassador at Rome, Joseph Bonaparte, was working upon the middle classes to incite them to rise against the Papal Government which, fearing disturbances, had ordered the military to patrol the city. At the end of December the wished for collision between the Revolutionists and the troops occurred, and in the midst of the confusion, General Duphot, a member of the Embassy, was shot by a Papal soldier. Joseph Bonaparte, in a state of great indignation, at once left the city; and Berthier, chief of the staff in Northern Italy, was ordered to march on Rome. Undoubtedly at this time there was a strong feeling against the Pope for the manner in which he had exercised his temporal power, and some of the reforming party within the Church itself also condemned his assumption of universal authority. The Republican army, which entered on February 10th, therefore found the city ripe for revolution, and five days after an excited multitude planted a tree of liberty in front of the Capitol as a symbol that Rome constituted itself a Republic. The Pope now shut himself up in the Vatican and refused to renounce his temporal power. He was consequently removed to Tuscany, and afterwards to Valence, where he died in 1799.[2]

1797. December.

1798. February.

The usual thing then happened. In return for the valuable loot of the palaces, museums, and residences of the

[1] "Les patriotes suisses n'avaient souhaité la révolution dans leur patrie que dans l'espérance d'obteuir deux grands avantages : l'abolition de toutes les dépendances de peuple à peuple et l'unité helvétique."—Thiers, vol. ix. p. 399.

[2] Thiers, vol. ix. pp. 384–389.

1798. February. nobility, the Romans were granted a new constitution based on the French, but with the ancient titles of Consuls, Senate, and Tribunate restored. The powers of those august and venerable bodies were, however, strictly limited by the caprice of the French General, who practically ruled as an autocrat.

1798. May. The long suffering Powers were at length roused by this last example of arbitrary constitution mongering, and once more began to consider a new coalition. The Emperor of Russia entered into the spirit of the scheme with almost the vigour and energy of Pitt himself, but in May his Minister informed the English Ambassador, Sir Charles Whitworth, that if it were necessary to send an army to any distance from the frontier it would be quite impossible to find the funds. Nevertheless Paul did not intend, in spite of financial difficulties, to follow the methods of the late Empress Catherine, whose garrulous promises usually led to no deeds, but was genuinely anxious to work with the European league against the French, and in June sent an auxiliary squadron of ten ships of the line, and five frigates, to help England.

Austria, on the other hand, remained a dark horse,[2] and Prussia had no spirit for further resistance. But while the Powers were deliberating the Republic was acting, and on May 19th Bonaparte sailed from Toulon with the most formidable armament that had ever left France, Great Britain having only a small detachment from the fleet at Cadiz at this time in the Mediterranean. With Nelson in command this small squadron had nevertheless kept a close watch on Toulon until driven away by stress of weather, when seizing their opportunity the French put to sea, and meeting with no opposition, arrived at Malta on June 16th. Here Bonaparte was at once put in possession of the stronghold by the knights of the Order of St. John, who held the reins of Government,[3] although he could not have stopped even to

[1] From Sir Charles Whitworth, St. Petersburg, May 12, 1798.

[2] Ibid., July 6, 1798. "The Court of Vienna still maintains a strict reserve as to its intentions."—F. O. Records, Russia, 40.

[3] The Grand-Master, Hornpesch, at first resisted, but Boisredout Ransijal, treasurer, stated he would not struggle against his countrymen the French, and soon the knights gave up the whole island to the French.—Porter's "Knights of Malta," vol. ii. pp. 440–453.

attempt a siege if any resistance had been made. Urged repeatedly by Sir William Hamilton at Naples, the British Government now at length decided to send a strong fleet into the Mediterranean as soon as possible "to rescue from destruction a Power with whom his Majesty has always been anxious to maintain the most friendly intercourse." In return for this help the British Government demanded that their fleet should enter any of the Neapolitan ports to obtain supplies, and that these ports should be shut to all the enemy's ships, and their commerce prohibited. England also demanded, in order to strengthen her fleet, 3000 seamen or more from the ports of Naples, and a like number from Austria in the Adriatic, who should be bound to serve during the whole war. Sir William was further instructed to inform the Neapolitan Minister that King George was thinking of entertaining proposals for a separate peace with Spain, who seemed favourably disposed, provided it could be done "without incurring the immediate hostility of France." In such a case, as one of the most pressing exigencies of the naval service would be removed, the British Government could then engage to keep a force in the Mediterranean superior to that of the enemy for the rest of the war.[1] 1798. May.

In May, therefore, Nelson received reinforcements, and was ordered[2] to pursue the French fleet; but the latter, after leaving Malta, managed to avoid the British, and arrived at Alexandria unmolested on July 1, 1798. The landing was soon effected, and the city surrendering at once an advance on Cairo followed five days after. Here, at the foot of the Pyramids, the Egyptian forces gave battle, the Mameluke cavalry repeatedly charging Bonaparte's infantry, but they were repulsed with enormous loss. Ultimately their camp was stormed, Cairo was occupied, and the French were masters of Egypt. Nelson in the meantime was scouring the Mediterranean, but his swift fleet had passed the French in the night, and arrived first at Alexandria on June 29th,

[1] To Sir William Hamilton, April 20, 1798. F. O. Records, Sicily, 11.

[2] "Most secret" orders from Lord St. Vincent that a French fleet was preparing at Toulon reached Nelson on May 2nd. Sir H. Nicolas' "Despatches and Letters," vol. iii. p. 12.

1798. May. and finding no enemy there, he had hurried back to Rhodes and Crete. At length he received information[1] which caused him to sail once more for Egypt, where he found the French fleet of thirteen battleships, four frigates, and two mortar boats anchored across the entrance to the Bay of Aboukir. The position assumed was a strong one, the line being in the shape of a bow with the convex side looking outwards.[2] Nelson decided to attack at once and the action commenced 1798. August. at 6.30 P.M. on August 1, 1798, being continued by the light of the burning ships and the firing of the guns. *L'Orient*, 120 guns, was anchored in the centre of the line, and carried the Admiral. The elements were once more favourable to England, for the wind was blowing down the line of the French ships, thus making it possible to bring a great force to bear on a few ships at a time. One after the other the French were attacked with overwhelming force, and after three hours the five foremost ships in the van were either burnt or captured. At 9 P.M. *L'Orient* caught fire, and at 10 P.M. blew up with a tremendous explosion. Still the action was continued by such of the British ships as were in a condition to be navigated safely. These proceeded down the line, partially disabled though they were, to attack the fresh ships of the enemy who had until now been helpless spectators, and by 5 A.M. only the two rear ships of the French line had their colours flying. At 11 A.M. these two ships had also been satisfied, and accompanied by two frigates cut their cables and stood out to sea pursued by Captain Hood in the *Zealous*, but as there was no other ship in a condition to support him, he was recalled. These four ships were thus the only ones which escaped out of a total of nineteen. The Battle of the Nile, as it is called, is thus distinguished as the greatest victory, considered from the point of view of the most complete destruction of an enemy's fleet, in history. The French lost 9000 men killed or prisoners out of a total of 11,000, and the British loss was 218 men killed and 677

[1] "Letters and Despatches," vol. iii. p. 46.

[2] On leaving Alexandria Bonaparte had strongly advised Admiral Brueys not to wait for the English and be attacked when at anchor, but the Admiral had remained to hear that Cairo was occupied.—Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, vol. x. p. 54.

wounded.[1] Nelson, being surfeited with prizes which he could not man, was compelled to burn several after removing from them as much as possible in the shape of stores and other necessities. The French army was now in a veritable trap in Egypt, completely cut off from all hope of return or reinforcement from home. 1798. August.

The remnants of the French fleet also fared badly, for one of the battleships, and the two frigates which had escaped, sailed for Malta, but on their arrival were driven out by the Maltese, who were already up in arms against the French, and had retaken several of their towns and the castle of St. Angelo.

At the end of September Nelson arrived at Naples in the *Vanguard*, and ordered Captain Ball of the *Alexandria* with three ships to proceed off the island of Malta, and endeavour to blockade the harbours of the island so as to prevent the French ships from leaving, and the troops from receiving supplies. A small incident at this date well shows the unhappy condition of mutual distrust among the allies. During the summer Nelson had repeatedly complained to Hamilton that the King of Naples would only admit three or four battleships into his ports instead of the whole fleet, opining in his forcible way that such treatment was "scandalous for a great nation to put up with."[2] Sir William inquired into the reason for this, and wrote home on August 4, 1798, giving as an explanation that the Court of Naples "could not without great risk throw off the mask, until it had received the ratified treaty with the Emperor of Germany, and the two supplementary articles by which the Emperor is bound to defend his Sicilian Majesty in case of an attack from any enemy, in consequence of his having thrown open his ports to the King's ships without limitation."[3] Nevertheless, King Ferdinand was very anxious to conclude without delay a new treaty of alliance with Great Britain, for the presence of Nelson at Naples had now infused with courage the cowardly Court, and the superstitious King who, during

[1] "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. p. 48. James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 163. In the "Despatches" is included the account of the Battle of the Nile, by Captain Sir Edward Berry, published immediately afterwards.

[2] To Hamilton from Nelson, July 22, 1798. "Despatches," vol. iii. p. 47.

[3] From Hamilton, August 4, 1798. F. O. Records, Sicily, 11.

1798. August. this period of danger, had spent long hours invoking the saints against the enemies of divine right, and the conquerors of the Pope. The whole kingdom was indeed in a most disgraceful condition; the Court, the navy, and the army were corrupt and cowardly; spies and priests by a word could consign any one, innocent or guilty, to prison, where they languished for years untried; while all ideas of a better system were crushed from the breasts of the educated and thoughtful, who were hoping for more liberty. England alone was struggling honestly to liberate the oppressed, and instructed Hamilton to arrange for the escape of the Pope from the Tuscan States, and for his embarkation on a British frigate which would be stationed off the coast between Leghorn and Pisa.[1] But Ferdinand now plucked up courage, and published a Proclamation announcing that he intended to occupy the Papal States, and restore the Government of

1798. November. the Pope, and on the 24th of November the Neapolitan army, led by the Austrian General Mack, crossed the frontier.

While this army was hastening to its destruction, Nelson had many important duties to fulfil. He was charged with the protection of the coasts of Sicily, Naples, and the Adriatic, with the blockade of Malta, and with the important business of preventing communication between France and Egypt. He was also to co-operate with the Turkish and Russian squadrons in the Archipelago, for the Ottoman Government had now declared war against France, estimating at its true value the professions of friendship with which Bonaparte had invaded Egypt. The Republic was therefore at war with England, Russia, Naples, and Turkey at the end of 1798, and Austria was rapidly preparing for a campaign in the spring.[2] The multifarious duties of Nelson gave him no rest, and after visiting Malta in November he returned to Naples, where he embarked 5000 troops on board the English and Portuguese squadrons, and sailed for Leg-

[1] To Sir William Hamilton, November 6, 1798. F. O. Records, Sicily, 11.

[2] "Prussia looked calmly on, with a view of increasing her power by peace whilst other States ruined themselves by war, and of offering her arbitration at a moment when she could turn their mutual losses to advantage."—Menzel's "History of Germany," vol. iii. p. 216.

horn on November 28th, which at once surrendered on his arrival.[1] 1798. November.

Meanwhile Mack led his army straight towards Rome, where there was no French force capable of much resistance, since the bulk of their army was in the neighbourhood of Ancona. On the approach of the Neapolitan army Championnet, the French Commander, therefore evacuated the city, and fell back on Civita Castellana, thirty miles north of the capital, and Ferdinand entered Rome unopposed on November 29th. At once a scene of violence occurred as disgraceful as that which followed the entry of the French a few months before, but this time under the cloak of Religion instead of that of Liberty, the two terms which, conveying the highest ideals, have unfortunately been the cause of the most bloodshed. The tree of liberty was replaced by a cross, several Jews were thrown into the Tiber, and many executions took place.

But where any real fighting occurred the Neapolitans were disgracefully beaten, and the few weak detachments which Mack had sent towards the east of the Peninsula, where the French were in strong force, had all been beaten or captured. Mack now advanced to Civita Castellana, but his troops were at once routed and the country was again under French domination.[2] Nelson had nothing but contempt for the Neapolitan officers, and wrote to Lord Spencer that they all ran away, that General St. Philip deserted to the enemy, and that another general fled in an action between Ancona and Rome.[3]

King Ferdinand now hastily departed, and Championnet re-entered Rome, where the Republican party at once declared for France, and, after a few days' preparation, advanced into Neapolitan territory.[4] Once in their own country, the spirit which at times makes the veriest coward a hero fell upon the Neapolitans, who could not be induced to fight in the Papal States under professional officers, but here collected together to defend their Fatherland under leaders of their own. A 1798. December.

[1] To the Earl of St. Vincent, from Nelson. "Despatches," vol. iii. p. 177.
[2] Thiers, tome x. p. 3.
[3] "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. p. 195.
[4] Thiers, vol. x. p. 113.

1798. December. terrible system of guerilla warfare ensued, and Championnet's army lost heavily but succeeded in taking the stronghold of Gaeta, which was defended by regular soldiers, who surrendered at once.

Mack now concentrated his troops before Capua, and if Naples had been united in its patriotic sentiment the French army of 18,000 men might easily have been overcome,[1] but the whole political system of the country was rotten, distrust, jealousy, and panic paralysing the Government and the people. The Court feared a republican rising, the Church distrusted the Court, Mack despised his troops, and they in turn accused him of treachery. The only honest people in the neighbourhood were Nelson and his Jacks, and the Court threw itself on his protection, which, needless to say, was at once accorded. On December 21st the King, Queen, and Royal Family with a large, and, to Nelson, embarrassing retinue, and with much treasure and jewels, therefore embarked on the *Vanguard*, accompanied by Sir William and Lady Hamilton, and five days later were safely landed at Palermo. The Royal Family were now distrustful of their own aristocracy, and the Queen told Nelson that the nobles were attempting to negotiate a truce or peace with the French offering to exclude the present King from the throne.[2] How far this was true Nelson could not ascertain, but the brave and honest sailor was very puzzled that a kingdom with 50,000 troops could be overcome by 12,000 men without a single contest which could be dignified by the name of a battle. On the departure of the Royal Family order was maintained by a civic guard enrolled by the Municipality, until it became known that Mack and Prince Pignatelli, whom the Court had left in charge of the capital, had concluded an armistice with the French, and surrendered Capua. Then the people raised their heads, and anarchy reigned supreme; the prisons were thrown open, and while the priests shouted treason, the mob and released criminals revelled in riot and murder. In this manner ended the year 1798 in Naples.

Meanwhile the British Government were not at all satisfied

[1] Capua was ceded to France with much Neapolitan territory on January 11, 1799.

[2] "Despatches," vol. iii. p. 206 *et seq.*

with the reserve which had been maintained during the year 1798.
by Thugut and the Austrian Court. Grenville therefore wrote to Sir Charles Whitworth, Ambassador at St. Petersburg, that King George had daily "more reason to be apprehensive that the system on which the Court of Vienna was acting was inconsistent with all ideas of concert or co-operation with England, and that nothing but the most energetic and decisive language and conduct from the Emperor of Russia could hold out any solid expectation of producing any vigorous determination at that Court." [1] Austria was, in fact, much less actuated by any idea of crushing the common enemy than by aggrandising herself in Piedmont, nor was she in the least anxious to recover the Netherlands, which were of no use to her. Any one who has read and thought over the history of this period must have experienced a sensation of surprise, not so much that the Courts were actuated purely by motives of aggrandisement but at the means to which they stooped to carry out their designs. Austria, Prussia, and Russia were indeed, while nominally allies against France, endeavouring to advance their own interests by any means, and did not hesitate for a moment to attempt to deceive each other. In England the Ministers were united in their opposition to France, but the state of party politics led to the most bitter feeling. Burke, actuated by the highest ideals, had not hesitated to adopt the most exaggerated language in order to inflame the nation against the French and to make peace more difficult to arrange, and he certainly stooped to most unfair methods to bias the judges against Warren Hastings, who, at the very worst, was at least as honest as most European statesmen. Fox, Grey, and Sheridan repeatedly stated what they must have known would lead to misapprehension of the true condition of affairs, and on most occasions were actuated more by a party feeling of opposition than by a desire to criticise questions on their merits. No one expects statecraft, or any other business of practical life, to be carried on without considerable compromises between plain truth and diplomatic tact, but when the political standard between nations falls far below that of the ethics of private life, the

[1] Grenville to Whitworth, December, 1798. F. O. Records, Russia, 41.

1798. certain outcome is suspicion and distrust, followed by hatred and war, of which the brunt is borne, not by the politicians who bring it about, but by the nation who pays the bill in lives and treasure. The attitude of Fox and the Opposition during this year showed clearly that they placed their party before national interests. The country was now involved in a war, and its enemies refused to make peace, so no blame could be attached to the Ministers; Ireland was in the throes of rebellion, but in England, although funds were low, and much foreign trade was impossible, the people were, for the most part, bearing their burdens and paying the increased taxes without murmuring. At this time if party feeling, which is as essential to a politician as reason is to a scientific philosopher, or faith to a prophet, could not be entirely subordinated to patriotism, at least it was incumbent on the Foxites not to endeavour to embarrass the Government still further by a futile opposition. Fox and his friends absented themselves from Parliament except on rare occasions, and this would have been a meritorious thing to do if the motive had been a desire not to discredit the Government, but that this was not the true reason of their secession from the debates is proved by their action outside the House.

1798. January. On January 24th a great dinner was given to celebrate Fox's birthday at the Crown and Anchor, and at least two thousand persons attended. The Duke of Norfolk gave the toast of the evening, calling Fox "a man dear to the friends of freedom," and reminded his hearers that "not twenty years ago the illustrious George Washington had not more than two thousand men to rally round him when his country was attacked. America is now free. This day full two thousand men are assembled in this place; I leave you to make the application." But more was to come, for when the Duke was returning thanks for his own health he stated, "Give me leave before I sit down to call on you to drink our sovereign's health—the majesty of the people."[1] Now such language from Messrs. Thomas Hardy, John Thelwall, and Horne Tooke would have carried but little more weight than the utterances of the Marble Arch orators of the present

[1] *Annual Register*, 1798, part ii. p. 6.

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Right Hon. Charles James Fox. M. P.

day, and might have been ignored, but when a prominent aristocrat spoke them in the presence of the leader of the Opposition it was quite another matter, and the Government promptly compelled the Duke to give up the command of a militia regiment and the Lord Lieutenancy of the West Riding, two offices conferred upon him by the Crown of England, whom he apparently regarded as otherwise than his sovereign. 1798. January.

The British public have never been much affected by high sounding but meaningless phrases, and although a considerable section wished for a reform of Parliament, and coveted that cherished possession which is presumed to be the emblem of freedom—a vote—few imagined that the "majesty of the people" was anything more than a phrase, but they realised that an invasion of their shores would have been a very unpleasant reality and so supported the Government steadily. The country was now heavily in debt, and although the taxes were steadily increasing, the Ministers, acting on an idea of the Speaker's, appealed for public subscriptions. At once the rich merchants and manufacturers came forward with heavy contributions, and public bodies were as usual generous with large donations. The Bank of England subscribed £200,000, and the city of London £10,000, and on the whole these voluntary offerings amounted to two millions sterling. But the expenditure steadily increased, and in April it was necessary to bring in a new scheme of taxation. Pitt proposed to make perpetual the land tax, which was now at the rate of four shillings in the pound, and was granted every year by Act of Parliament. The annual produce of this tax was about £2,000,000, and he proposed to apply the capital value of it to the reduction of the National Debt. In other words landed security was to be substituted for funded. The manner this was to be done was as follows: each landowner had the option of redeeming the tax for twenty years' purchase, but if he were unable or unwilling to do so another person might buy the tax. Payment of the redemption or buying of the tax need not be made by money but by Government stock, which would be transferred to the Commissioner for liquidating the National Debt. But there was to be a public gain, for since the three 1798. April.

1798. April. per cent. stock stood now at fifty, the investor received six per cent., and the price was sixteen or seventeen years' purchase; but as the price of redemption of the land tax was to be twenty years' purchase, the public would gain one-fifth of the purchase. If the price of three per cent. stock rose to seventy-five, the price of redemption would be thirty years' purchase, and so on. Thus the public, instead of receiving £2,000,000 a year, would receive £2,400,000. The Bill was strongly resisted; by some on the ground that it would increase the burden of the landed classes, and by others that it would favour the monied classes at the expense of the landed, neither of which contentions were economically sound,[1] but notwithstanding opposition it was carried by large majorities. In spite of all these arrangements of new loans, new taxes, and voluntary subscriptions, the public defence absorbed more money than was flowing into the Exchequer, and on April 25th Pitt announced that there must be an addition of three millions to his former estimates, and to meet it a new loan with more taxes to pay for the interest—notably on armorial bearings, and a high tax on tea. There was no choice, and the House voted them as cheerfully as any tax is voted.

In the early months of this year the Government received information of an intended invasion of England by General Bonaparte and 275,000 French troops.[2] There is considerable doubt among historians whether the French Directory really meditated an invasion at this date, or merely intended that the reports of it should withdraw attention from their designs on Egypt. Thiers states that Bonaparte was not favourable to the plan; not that he thought it difficult to land 60,000 men in England, and to march on London, but he felt that to conquer the country, and to establish themselves there, would be impossible.[3] On the other hand, it is known that he drew up a most complete plan for the invasion, and most extensive preparations were made in which the Dutch navy was included but not the Spanish.[4]

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. p. 1360.
[2] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 165.
[3] Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution Français*, vol. ix. p. 363.
[4] James' "Naval History of England," vol. ii. p. 113.

But when Bonaparte sailed from Toulon on his ill-fated expedition to Egypt, General Kilmaine succeeded him in command of the "armée d'Angleterre," as it was already publicly named, and active preparations for its reception were made on this side of the Channel. At this time there was a large accession of Irish refugees at Paris. Napper Tandy and the younger Tone had fled from Dublin; Lowry Tennant and others from Belfast; but their information does not seem to have been of much use to General Kilmaine.[1] The spy Turner, *alias* "Lord Downshire's friend," appears to have enjoyed more confidence, and he was received by Talleyrand, now Foreign Secretary, on April 19th. The plausible lawyer began by endeavouring to persuade the Minister that he had been trying to bring over to the side of the United Irishmen the country gentlemen of Ireland, most of whom had commissions in the yeomanry or militia, but this story of Turner's was not based on facts. He next stated that Ireland was prepared to force the hand of England, and form a Republic when the invasion occurred, and asked if they should wait for them or not, to which Talleyrand replied that they were to wait and not expose themselves, but refused to fix a time for the French effort. The betrayer then told Talleyrand that the spirit of the North was completely broken, in order to cause the French to land on some other point of the coast. Talleyrand appears to have urged on the invasion, thinking that Nelson's fleet was manned almost exclusively by Irishmen, and giving it as his opinion that their patriotism would cause them to see in the English their oppressors and enemies. All this information was given to the English Home Office through Pelham the Irish Secretary.[2] 1798. April.

Now, although the enthusiastic Irish refugees Lewins and Wolfe Tone were indefatigable in urging on the Directory, who were apparently not unwilling to make an effort, nothing was ready in the French navy, and the master mind of 1798. August.

[1] Memoirs of Wolfe Tone, June 16, 1798. "The conversation naturally introduced the subject of the grand expedition against England or Ireland, of which, from Kilmaine's report, I do not see the smallest probability."—Tone's "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 315.

[2] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 231–236. "Secret Service under Pitt," Fitzpatrick, chapter iv.

1798. August. military enterprise had sailed with the best troops to Egypt. At length Humbert set sail from the island of Aix on August 6th, with three frigates and only 1063 soldiers, no other force being ready to co-operate with him. Taking a long and circuitous course they attempted to make Donegal Bay, but being prevented by adverse winds sailed for Killala Bay on the coast of Mayo, and anchored near the town of Killala on August 22nd.[1] The same evening they landed and easily overpowered a small force of fifty men, who were ordered to resist the invaders. The French had brought with them three United Irishmen, Matthew Tone, a brother of Wolfe Tone, Bartholomew Teeling, and one named Sullivan. It is impossible to imagine a more hopeless or ridiculous enterprise than the one which Irish enthusiasm had urged on, and these simple-minded, courageous French soldiers had been ordered to undertake. Humbert himself was only a rude uneducated peasant, with a natural ability for military enterprises, which had been trained by much experience, including that of the Bantry Bay expedition in 1796. The inhabitants of Mayo were peaceful and simple peasants, and had probably never heard of the French Revolution, or even the wonderful expressions the "majesty of the people" and the "rights of man." Instead, therefore, of finding a population eager to be led against a tyrannical Government, the French found a half naked, semi-savage population, who received with gratitude the beautiful blue uniforms, and, at great risk to each other, amused themselves trying to shoot crows with the rifles brought for them. They, however, had some idea that the French were the special champions of the Roman Catholic religion, and this increased the number of recruits, who were, with the greatest difficulty, restrained from plundering and taught some form of discipline.

After leaving some soldiers to keep order at Killala, and reconnoitring Ballina, the French pushed on towards Castlebar with about 500 of the Irish recruits. Meanwhile, on hearing the news of the invasion, Lord Cornwallis had at once sent General Lake to command in Connaught, and gave orders for a concentration of many thousands of troops from

[1] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 789.

other provinces. But Major General Hutchinson, who commanded at Connaught, and was at Galway when the news arrived, had already reached Castlebar on the 25th, and had found the country through which he passed perfectly quiet. General Lake arrived the next night, and at once took command of Hutchinson's troops, numbering 4000 men, and General Taylor's force of 1200 yeomanry, who had marched from Sligo. Humbert, with a force of about 700 French and the inefficient Irish recruits, with only thirty or forty mounted men and two small guns, after an arduous march of fifteen hours, along a wild rocky path, appeared before Castlebar at 7 A.M. on the 27th. Lake and Hutchinson had taken up a very strong position on a height above Castlebar, but the French soldiers, some of whom had been trained by Bonaparte, climbed the hill in the face of a deadly cannonade and fire from rifles, and carried the position at the point of the bayonet. Lake's troops broke and fled through the streets of Castlebar, leaving their guns, flags, and ammunition in the hands of the French, and did not stop in their headlong flight until they reached Tuam, thirty miles from the scene of action. The rout of the Irish Militia was in fact the most complete and disgraceful affair in the history of the country.[1] 1798. August.

Humbert remained at Castlebar, endeavouring to win the support of the country,[2] and removed from Killala the troops he had left there, greatly to the consternation of the Protestant Bishop Dr. Stock, and the loyal inhabitants, who lived in perpetual fear of being massacred.[3] There was, however, very little outrage committed by the rebels, who had not been worked upon by the United Irish to any great extent, and had been kept under severe discipline by the French troops during their period of occupation. 1798. September.

[1] Gordon states that when the French officers first saw the number and arrangement of our troops they expected they would be obliged to surrender. He continues, "they must have probably laid down their arms if General Lake had not commanded a retreat, which was the real cause of the rout," p. 285.

[2] "After their victory at Castlebar the French received great accessions of Irish peasantry to their standard, who increased the numbers of the enemy but proved to be of no effectual aid to them."—Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 793.

[3] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 214.

1798. September. Humbert soon found that a general rising of the people was not to be expected, and meanwhile English troops were pouring into the country. General Knox, who was under orders for the West Indies, was suddenly recalled, and landed at Galway in the beginning of September. Lake's army had been reorganised and joined with Taylor's, while Cornwallis appeared with 20,000 men, and on the 8th the French were completely surrounded and forced to surrender. The Irish rebels with the French were cut down without mercy, but Matthew Tone and Teeling were sent to Dublin, tried by court-martial, condemned and hanged.

A force of about 1200 militiamen now marched on Killala and relentlessly cut down the rebels, and burnt their cabins on September 23rd, thus ending both the invasion and the rebellion, which, but for the advent of the French, would never have occurred.[1] Humbert and the French soldiers were sent to England and exchanged as prisoners of war, and an Irish officer, O'Keon, who had accompanied the expedition, having proved that he was a naturalised Frenchman, was treated in the same manner.

Soon after the Humbert expedition had left Dunkirk, Napper Tandy, who had sought refuge in Paris, persuaded the French to allow him to endeavour to effect an invasion also, and the Directory, always willing to harass their enemies, even in a minor way which could lead to no decisive result, placed at his disposal a corvette named the *Anacreon*, with a small party of soldiers, and a supply of arms and ammunition. Two other United Irishmen were on board, Murphy, and George Orr, the probable author of the account of Tandy's expedition given in the "Castlereagh Correspondence;"[2] and two soldiers of fortune, "General" Rey and Thomas Blackwell. This expedition also sailed for the north-west coast of Ireland, probably acting on the advice which Turner had repeatedly given to General Joubert and Talleyrand, and reached the Isle of Arran and Donegal on September 16th, where Napper Tandy landed at the town of Rutland, and easily took possession of the place, since there

[1] Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 797.

[2] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 226. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. pp. 405-411.

were no English troops within twenty-five miles. He now examined the letters and newspapers at the Post Office, and learnt that Humbert and his force had been captured. Understanding, therefore, that it was useless remaining, he re-embarked and sailed for Bergen in Norway, in order to avoid the English fleet, whence he and a few others made their way to Hamburg, but Murphy and Orr were sent to England and soon disclosed everything they knew. 1798. September.

Tandy, Moores, Blackwell, and Corbett were all arrested at Hamburg on November 24, 1798, by order of Crawford, the British Minister, and in spite of the protest of the French Resident, who wrote demanding their release as French citizens, they were detained in custody. Ten months afterwards they were handed over to the English, and taken on board a frigate. Bonaparte was furious at this action of the Hamburg Government, and although the Senate pleaded necessity, and profusely apologised, he fined the town four millions and a half francs. Tandy, now nearly seventy years of age, was taken to Ireland and tried for high treason in April 1801, when he pleaded Guilty, and was sentenced to death, but was reprieved at once, and a few months later allowed to go to France. Bonaparte having claimed him as a French General, he was received with military honours at Bordeaux in 1802, and died in the following year. Blackwell and Morres were released without trial, and Corbett escaped, afterwards becoming a General of brigade in the French army.

A third French expedition, despatched to Ireland in the autumn of 1798, was much more ambitious in its dimensions, consisting of a ship of the line, the *Hoche*, eight small frigates and a schooner, with a military force of 3000 men.[1] Admiral Bompard was in command of the ships, and General Hardy of the soldiers, Wolfe Tone accompanying Bompard in the *Hoche*, although he thought such a small expedition was hopeless. The fleet started from Brest on September 14th, and in twenty-three days reached Lough Swilly. But the English Government as usual received information from some of the gentlemen who combined the profession of spy with that of rebel, and on October 12th a powerful squadron, under Sir John Warren, bore down upon the French. After

[1] "Memoirs of Tone," vol. ii. p. 345 *et seq.*

1798. September. a desperate resistance for four hours, the *Hoche* at length surrendered, and three of the frigates were pursued and captured after a brave defence. Wolfe Tone, who was immediately recognised when he was landed at Lough Swilly, was conveyed to Dublin and tried by court-martial on November 10th. He made no attempt to conceal the part he had played, but begged to be shot as a soldier, which request was refused, and he was sentenced to be hanged on November 12th. He decided to anticipate the sentence, and the night before the day fixed for the execution he cut his throat with a penknife, and after lying in agony for a week died of his wound.

1798. November. This closed the history of French expeditions to Ireland. In reviewing the whole facts, there can be little doubt that the chief object of the Directory at this date was to embarrass England, and draw both her troops and ships away from the Continent. None of the expeditions, alone, had a chance of success, and even if all had simultaneously landed and been joined by considerable numbers of the Irish, the English troops in Ireland would have far outmatched them. The Irish rebels were apparently regarded by the French Directory as enthusiasts, carried away by their feelings, and although their information, especially that of the spy Turner, was to a certain extent acted upon, there is no evidence to show that the idea of making an attempt to conquer and occupy Ireland was ever seriously considered.

CHAPTER IX

Naples surrenders to Championnet — Strong feeling against the Court—Thugut joins the coalition—Arrangements of allied armies—Success of the Austrians—Murder of the French envoys—Archduke Charles defeats the French—Success of Suvaroff—Nelson and Hamilton on Malta—Cardinal Ruffo treats with the rebels—Harsh measures of Nelson—Surrender of Capua and Gaeta—Proposals of Thugut—Suspicions of Russia—Folly of Austrian Government—Defeat of Korsakoff and retreat of Suvaroff—English and Russian expedition to Holland—Blunders of the Duke of York—Attempt of Turkey to recover Egypt—Bonaparte returns to France—A new Constitution—Action against the Sultan of Mysore—Siege of Seringapatam—End of the Concert of Europe.

THE commencement of the year 1799 saw Naples in a state of anarchy, which reached a climax on the morning of January 15, when the mob sallied forth from the gates to throw themselves on the French, who were then about nine miles from the city. Not all, however, for many of the Republican party thought that the entry of Championnet was the only means of restoring order, and these managed to get possession of the fort of St. Elmo, while the French were attacking the suburbs. On the 23rd they hoisted the French flag and turned the guns on the people, while the fortress of the Carmine was being stormed, but both sides were soon tired of the slaughter, and eagerly accepting the promise of Championnet to respect the Church of St. Januarius, the loyal Neapolitans laid down their arms. 1799. January.

A strong feeling now arose against the Court, which had fled in the hour of peril, and in favour of Republican Government. This exactly suited the plans of Championnet, who drew up a new Constitution on the lines of the French, the Kingdom of Naples becoming the Parthenopean Republic, with a representative Assembly to frame the new laws.[1] These Utopian schemes were as usual followed by extortion and poverty, while the agents of the new Government, being full of ideals but empty of practical experience, added confusion

[1] Thiers, tome x. p. 118.

1799. January. to the existing misery. Then the priests incited the people to insurrection, and the violence of the native leaders was only equalled by that of the French columns which swept through the revolted districts.

The Austrian Court, now entirely dominated by Thugut, who for months had been waiting for a favourable opportunity to throw the weight of Austria on the side which would enable him to further his own designs, at length decided to join the coalition against France. With the shuffling manner which was characteristic of this Minister, he first gave it as his opinion that the French troops would not dare to penetrate into the heart of the kingdom of Naples, and then at the same interview confessed that the ruin of these dominions and those of Tuscany was inevitable. Although he would not arrange anything definite about a coalition with England, he denied that any negotiation was proceeding with France.[1]

Two months later Austria was still very unfriendly to Prussia, and wished to dissolve the Congress of Rastadt, but consented to re-enter the war with the professed object of liberating Switzerland and Northern Italy.[2] Already the Russian army, led by Suvaroff, had reached Moravia, and was expected in Lombardy in April, and since the Archduke Charles was also hastening to take the field, everything appeared to be in favour of the allies. The French, on the other hand, instead of being able to raise armies from the new Republics of Rome and Naples, had to send troops to help them maintain order. The Government indeed seemed to be on the decline; Carnot was in exile, and the work of organisation had fallen into the hands of his corrupt successors.[3] Bonaparte, the one controlling will who could direct the chaos of conflicting passions into definite channels, and bring military order out of anarchy, was away in Egypt.

[1] Sir Morton Eden to Grenville, Vienna, January 2, 1799: "He stated on his honour that this Court was not in negotiation with France, but would not say anything definite about the Concert of our two Courts as the means of establishing peace." F. O. Records, Austria, 54.

[2] Ibid., March 29th.

[3] "Cette confiance du gouvèrnement français dans ses forces était exaggérée, et lui cachait une partie des difficultés de sa position."—Thiers, vol. x. p. 122.

The British Government, which was not only expected to crush the enemy on the seas but also to be banker to the armies of Europe, had agreed to bear the expense of 45,000 troops, and requested the Court of St. Petersburg to march them towards the frontiers of Switzerland in order to co-operate there with the Austrians "for the deliverance of that country, and for the annoyance of the enemy." Nothing, however, could induce the Government of Berlin to take part in the commencing hostilities.[1] 1799. March.

The territory of Switzerland which, in the first war of the coalition, had been neutral, was now in the possession of the French, and the area of hostilities was therefore far greater than before, but allowed of continuous communication between the army in Germany and that on the Adriatic. On each side three armies were formed, Jourdan in command of the French on the Rhine was opposed to the Archduke Charles in Southern Germany; Massena in Switzerland faced the army of Hotze, a Swiss officer; and Scherer was opposed on the Adige by the Baron de Melas until Suvaroff should arrive with his corps from Russia.[2]

The French pursued their usual tactics and endeavoured to force the centre back into the Tyrol, while Jourdan drove the Archduke down the Danube. Massena was successful in his part, but Jourdan was overwhelmed by superior numbers near Lake Constance on March 25th, and forced to retreat beyond the Rhine. The Austrians, elated by this success, now overran Baden up to Rastadt, where the envoys of the smaller German States were still wrangling with the French in spite of the outbreak of hostilities. The Congress was now formally dissolved, and on April 28th the three French envoys were ordered to depart within twenty-four hours. These unfortunate politicians were scarcely clear of the Gates of Rastadt when they were attacked by a body of men dressed as Austrian hussars, and two of them were brutally murdered, but the third, after being severely wounded, managed to escape. This atrocious crime was attributed by the French Press, of course without the least evidence, to Mr. Pitt,[3] but the Austrians more reasonably 1799. April.

[1] To Sir Morton Eden, March 27, 1799. F. O. Records, Vienna, 54.

[2] Thiers, vol. x. p. 113 *et seq.*

[3] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 183.

1799. April. thought it was an outrage committed by drunken soldiers. The Archduke Charles therefore commenced an inquiry, but it was afterwards abandoned before any conclusion had been reached.

Not only were the French forces beaten in the North, but they suffered a decisive defeat at Magnano on the Adige on April 5th,[1] and were driven back to Milan; while Massena, deprived of the help of his colleagues, was also compelled to fall back and fix his centre at Zurich. Here he was attacked and defeated by the superior forces of the Archduke on June 4th, and was compelled to retreat to the ridge of the Uetliberg, where he remained in a strongly fortified position. Meanwhile Suvaroff had arrived in Lombardy in April, and forced the passage of the Adda on the 25th, which led to the surrender of Milan, and the dissolution of the Cisalpine Republic. The Russian General then rapidly advanced into the Sardinian capital, and cut off the French General Moreau from retreat over the Alps, so that he was compelled to wait for Macdonald with the army which had occupied Naples, and was now hastening to his support. But before a junction could be effected he was met by Suvaroff on the Trebbia, and after three days' desperate fighting was overthrown on June 18th. The Russians had thus shown themselves worthy allies, and when Pitt moved for a grant in June [2] of £825,000, to make good his Majesty's engagements,[3] the House voted it without a division.

1799. March. The English Ministers were watching with anxiety the result of the war, but never for a moment thought of relaxing their efforts to turn the French out of Naples. When Hamilton wrote home on January 16th, informing them that Marshall Pignatelli had concluded an armistice for two months with Championnet and agreed to pay two and a half millions of ducats, Grenville replied that the recent events had by no means diminished the friendship of George III., but only rendered him still more anxious to

[1] Thiers, vol. x. p. 163.

[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 1043.

[3] In the treaty it was stipulated to pay £225,000 and £75,000 monthly for 45,000 men, besides a further payment if peace were only made by common consent.

prove it by his conduct in ratifying the treaty of alliance. The idea of the British Government is shown by the continuation of the despatch: "The King is desirous of enabling his Sicilian Majesty to make such immediate exertions as may lead to the assembling and arming a force in Calabria, to be ready to take advantage of the first moment when the French may be obliged to withdraw their force towards the north of Italy."[1] 1799. March.

Nelson was now blockading Malta, and in February Valetta was stormed by Captain Ball, but the attack failed, owing to the cowardice of the Maltese. His Sicilian Majesty, however, steadily assured both Nelson and Hamilton that he would never cede the island to any power without the consent of Great Britain, but since the inhabitants had been so oppressed by the Knights of the Order of St. John, he repeatedly offered it to the British. It was not, however, accepted, for Nelson at this time thought it would be a useless expense, although he realised that at any risk it must not remain in the hands of the French.[2]

A curious anomaly in our system of Government at this time led to some trouble and annoyance. One of the captains in the navy, Sir Sidney Smith, was appointed joint Minister with his brother at the Porte, in which capacity he gave passports, and proposed to allow French ships to leave Alexandria. Nelson, as his superior officer, ordered him and all the ships under his command to allow no one to leave Egypt, and clearly stated to Lord St. Vincent that he would brook no interference with his command. Thus the French were still unable to communicate with their army in Egypt, and in March Captain Troubridge intercepted an ambassador of Bonaparte's who was proceeding to Constantinople with an offer to enter into terms for the evacuation of Egypt. The same distinguished officer was then ordered to blockade Naples, so as to prevent the French obtaining supplies from the sea, but he was instructed not to fire on the town.[3] Early in April Troubridge succeeded in obtaining possession of the castle, when the people tore

[1] To Hamilton, March 25, 1799. F. O. Records, Sicily, 12.
[2] To Earl Spencer, April 6, 1799. "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. p. 315.
[3] Ibid., p. 308.

1799. March. down the tricolour and uprooted the tree of liberty. This was the signal for the inevitable reaction, and all through Southern Italy bands of fanatical peasants rose against their new masters. Taking advantage of this feeling Cardinal Ruffo collected several of them into a force known as the Army of the Faith, and after conquering Apulia and Calabria appeared before Naples.

1799. June. Assisted by some English and Russian vessels in the harbour, and expecting support from the faithful within the city, Ruffo next attacked the suburbs on the 13th of June, and the most terrible scenes of outrage, massacre, and savage cruelty continued for five days, when the Cardinal proposed a suspension of arms. This was accepted by the Republicans, who were still in possession of the forts, and, after some negotiations, conditions of peace were signed on the 23rd by Ruffo, by Captain Foote acting on behalf of Great Britain, and by a representative of Russia. It was arranged that the garrison should be treated as though they had honourably capitulated, but they were not to be taken as prisoners of war, and were to be allowed either to stay there or to proceed to Toulon. Their fate was destined to be far less pleasant, for just as they were embarking for Toulon Nelson appeared with his fleet, and declaring that Cardinal Ruffo had no power or orders to treat with the rebels, at once pronounced the treaty null and void, while Captain Foote was seriously reprimanded for his action in the matter.[1] There is a long statement in the Records by Captain Foote, justifying his action at this time, by which it appears that he had sent an officer to the Cardinal on June 17th, stating that the rebels had refused to surrender to an ecclesiastic, and announcing his intention to attack the fort. On the following day the Cardinal wrote requesting him to cease hostilities and not to renew them, as a negotiation was taking place, and on the 19th he received a project of capitulation signed by the Cardinal, with a request that he would add his name to it.[2]

[1] "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. p. 384.

[2] F. O. Records, Sicily, 12. Captain Foote adds: "I informed the Cardinal I had done so because I considered him as the confidential agent of his Sicilian Majesty." Nelson took entire responsibility, and at once issued a "Declaration to the Neapolitan Jacobins in the Castle of Uovo and Nuovo," stating he would not allow them to embark, and that they must surrender

It is a great pity for the sake of Nelson's reputation that he did not leave matters as they were, but he was so essentially an autocrat that he considered it his duty to repudiate at once the humane terms of the Cardinal, and to take all the rebels prisoners, to await the pleasure of the weak and unjust Ferdinand, who, having fled the kingdom at the moment of peril, was certain to be as harsh and vindictive as are all cowards when they are in a position of authority, and supported by overwhelming power. Admiral Caracciolo, who had accepted office under the new Government, and had attempted to escape, was tried by a court-martial of Neapolitan officers, and in spite of his old age and long service was hanged from a yard-arm. Above a hundred sentences of death were carried out, and all the suspects, largely men of thought and education who had striven to obtain some reform, were exiled or ruined. Meanwhile the British Government had arranged a treaty with the King, who had agreed to ratify it, the *casus foederis* being that he would maintain entire the Neapolitan territory.[1] 1799. June.

In July Nelson was ordered by Lord Keith to leave Sicily and proceed to Minorca, but disobeyed the order, because, since most of his men were then landed to drive the French from Naples, he thought it better to risk losing the former place than the latter. He explained, however, that when Capua and Gaeta fell, which he expected would happen in a few days, he would then send eight or nine ships to Minorca.[2] Capua surrendered on the 27th, and Gaeta on the 31st, and the French and Spanish fleets having sailed from Cartagena on the 29th, Nelson proceeded to Minorca, the hostile fleets of forty-three sail of the line passing through the Straits on July 8th or 9th. 1799. July.

Nelson now being suspicious that the Russians were anxious to possess Malta wrote to Captain Ball that he hoped that he would secure it before their arrival, but in order to understand what followed it is necessary briefly

themselves to "his Majesty's royal mercy." "Despatches," vol. iii. p. 386. Pamphlets were written by the score on this transaction, but from the original documents written at the time there can be no doubt Captain Foote was acting on the supposition that the Cardinal had full powers.

[1] F. O. Records, Sicily, 12.

[2] To Earl Spencer, July 13, 1799. "Despatches," vol. iii. p. 408.

1799. July. to call to mind the previous history of the island. In 1516 Sicily with the Maltese islands passed to the Emperor Charles V. as heir to the crown of Aragon; but fourteen years later Charles granted the ownership of all the castles, fortresses, and isles of Malta and Gozo, with complete jurisdiction to the Master and Knights of St. John. The sovereignty was thus in effect surrendered to the religious order, but the form of tenure from the Crown of Sicily was reserved by the annual payment of a falcon to the King.[1]

When in 1798 the island was surrendered to Bonaparte a secret and treacherous arrangement had previously been made with the French Knights of the Order.[2] This action was not supported by the Maltese people, who strongly objected to the French rule, and soon, rising in revolt, besieged the fortified cities, while the British, Portuguese, and Sicilian squadrons blockaded the whole island. Their feelings were indeed strongly in favour of the English, and at the beginning of 1799 Captain Ball, who commanded the squadron which afterwards besieged Valetta, was elected by them as their chief, and president of the Congress. In the meantime the Knights had nominated the Emperor of Russia Grand Master, but undoubtedly the King of Naples was suzerain, and Nelson had therefore instructed Ball to hoist the Sicilian flag. In order to prevent misunderstanding Nelson wrote to the Emperor of Russia on October 31, 1799, that until he was formally elected Grand Master of the Order of Malta he had directed the Sicilian flag to be hoisted, as he understood the King of Naples to be the legitimate sovereign had the Order not been restored. He also explained that his Sicilian Majesty had appointed Captain Ball as Governor, and he would hold the island until he, as Grand Master, appointed a person to the office.[3]

The allies now had the French Republic well under control, and could probably have altered the whole history

[1] Major Whitworth Porter's "Knights of Malta," vol. ii. p. 17.

[2] The Order of the Knights of St. John undertook never to make war on Sicily, and never to abandon the islands to any other power without the previous knowledge and consent of the Emperor. This stipulation they had broken, and the cession to France was therefore illegal and beyond their power.

[3] "Nelson Despatches," vol. iv. p. 78.

of the next fifteen years, if they had only shown a disinterested spirit, and been content with their own territorities, but they were still actuated by the desire for aggrandisement at the expense of unity of action. England and Russia were the least desirous of benefiting themselves, but both had a watchful eye on Malta. Austria was as usual greedy for gain, and had most ambitious ideas of extending her dominions. Baron Thugut, who by no means played the honest broker, at length made a confidential communication to Lord Minto, British Ambassador at Vienna, which was not to be revealed if not acted upon. On August 17th Lord Minto sent this proposal home, and it is interesting as showing the designs of the Court of Vienna at this period, and the views of Thugut. The Austrian Minister began as follows: "I have perceived a stronger inclination to divide France and perpetuate the distractions of that country than to re-establish either monarchy or any other steady Government." He then proceeded to argue coolly and implicitly on the policy of securing the tranquillity of Europe by this means of weakening France, and stated that the Emperor did not intend to burden himself again with the Low Countries, but in Italy he proposed to retain Piedmont and all that part of Savoy which was important in a military view; and Nice also, if he obtained possession of that country. The Papal Legations would also be retained by the Emperor. If Great Britain and Russia opposed the annexation of Piedmont it would probably throw Austria into a connection with the French Republic. When Lord Minto suggested that Prussia and Russia might object to such an extensive scheme of aggrandisement, Thugut answered that Prussia might take something also, provided it was "not too much."[1] This proposal Thugut was very anxious should not be communicated to Russia. 1799. August.

The answer from the British Government was that his Majesty could enter into no discussion separate from his ally the Emperor of Russia, and that he was prepared, with much more satisfaction, to acquiesce in a proposal for restoring to the King of Sardinia Piedmont and Savoy, and in assigning to him the Genoese territory in exchange for the 1799. November.

[1] F. O. Records, Austria, 55.

1799. November. restitution of the Novarese to Austria. His Majesty stipulated that his allies should not consent to leave the Netherlands at a peace in the hands of France.[1]

But although the designs of Austria were not revealed to Russia, Suvaroff soon became suspicious of the good faith of the Austrian generals, for as soon as his troops entered Turin, and he summoned the Sardinian officers to fight for their King, he was told to leave political affairs in the hands of the Viennese Ministry.[2] A new arrangement for carrying on the war was now agreed to, by which Suvaroff was to complete the conquest of Switzerland, Austria that of the Italian fortresses, while a combined British and Russian force should attack Holland. But apparently Thugut, who not only wished to aggrandise Austria, but was also jealous of Prussia gaining anything, feared that this plan would lead to the Netherlands being handed over to the Court of Berlin, and so ordered the greater part of the Archduke's army to the Lower Rhine, strongly against the advice of that General.

Every one was now suspicious of Thugut. The Czar, who had entered the war to prevent the aggrandisement of France, discovered that he was only aiding Austria's ambitious plans, while the King of Naples and the Pope were convinced that Thugut had designs even on their territory. However, for the moment, the allied force continued to act against the French in Italy; and Joubert, being attacked by Suvaroff, was hopelessly defeated at Novi on August 15th, in which battle the General lost his life, and France 11,000 men.[3] In spite of these magnificent victories the criminal folly of the Austrian Court, combined with the admirable disposition of the forces of Massena, soon annulled their effects, for the Archduke Charles had to march northwards, leaving the new Russian army under General Korsakoff, which was marching from the north to meet Suvaroff, with only 25,000 men to support it against the forces of Massena.

Korsakoff advanced to Zurich, and Suvaroff began his march into the Alps, but was delayed by insufficient trans-

[1] To Lord Minto, November 8, 1799, Austria, 57.
[2] See Fyffe's "History of Modern Europe," vol. i. p. 187.
[3] Thiers, vol. x. p. 258.

port, and before he could either cut the communication of Massena or join his colleague, the French General advanced to Zurich and totally defeated the Russians on September 26th. Nothing was left for Suvaroff but to effect his own retreat across a rough unknown mountainous district; and Russia, now thoroughly disheartened, withdrew from all active co-operation. Thus the French recovered the whole of the Swiss territory which they had lost during the campaign. 1799. November.

The Czar was now not only disgusted with Austria, but also greatly disappointed with England. In the summer, perceiving that Austria was actuated chiefly by the idea of aggrandising herself, he had planned an expedition to Holland in conjunction with England in which 25,000 English and 17,000 Russian troops were to attack the French in the Batavian Republic, and restore the Stadtholder. On August 13th the first division of 12,000 men under Sir Ralph Abercromby sailed from Deal and, having landed at the promontory of the Helder, defeated a Dutch corps and captured the fort. This initial success caused a movement in favour of the Stadtholder to break out among the seamen of the Dutch fleet, and thirteen battleships and some frigates surrendered to the British after Admiral Story and the officers had discovered that the men refused to fight. These ships were taken in the name of the Stadtholder but were afterwards purchased by the British.[1] This auspicious beginning was not followed up when the royal blunderer, the Duke of York, arrived with the second division in September and took over the command of the whole force. A battle at Alkmaar on September 19th gave the allies some slight advantage, but on October 3rd they were forced to retreat and were glad to be allowed to re-embark on the condition that England handed over to the French 8000 French and Dutch prisoners. The Russian officers complained bitterly at being sacrificed by the stupidity of the Duke of York, and the English General retaliated by blaming them, but the Czar was seriously affected against England because of the failure of the expedition. The most curious part of this lamentable military episode is that neither the King nor Pitt seemed to be either 1799. August. 1799. September.

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. ii. p. 309.

1799. September. greatly surprised or disappointed at the result. On September 23rd, before the allies had been defeated, the King wrote to Pitt as follows: "As to any event arising in Holland previous to my delivering it (the King's speech at the opening of Parliament) to-morrow I cannot say I think there is much reason to expect it. The country the troops have to pass through is much intersected, and if the enemy avails himself of these natural difficulties our advance must be slow." [1]

At the conclusion of the expedition Pitt wrote to his sister-in-law that, "under all the difficulties which the season and circumstances have produced, it ought to be a great satisfaction to us to know that our valuable army will be restored to us safe and entire." [2] The function of the British army is certainly not to remain safe at home, but we cannot condemn Pitt for allowing the Duke of York to be given the command after his miserable performance in 1794, for it must be remembered that at this time it was usual for the King to appoint any one he liked to high commands in the army, this prerogative not having yet been assumed by the Cabinet. In fact, so well was it known that the blame lay entirely upon the King that the Opposition did not attack the Government for not resisting the appointment, and indeed joined them in eulogies of York's conduct.

The effects of this defeat were far greater than the destruction of troops and the wasting of treasure, for it drove from England the one and only disinterested ally who had sufficient strength to be of any service against the common enemy.

1799. August. Meanwhile Bonaparte, being cut off from all communication with Europe, planned another conquest for his army, and early in the year marched into Syria. The Turks were easily routed in the field, and driven from the fortified places on his line of march, but when he reached Acre he found Djezzar Pacha firmly placed in the fortress awaiting a siege. The brave Ottoman General would undoubtedly have had to capitulate if it had not been for the timely and active co-operation of Sir Sidney Smith, commander of the squadron

[1] King George III. to Pitt. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii.; Appendix, p. 19.

[2] Pitt to Lady Chatham. Ibid., p. 200.

ordered to watch Egypt, and also joint Minister to the Porte. Landing with some of his crew in boats he exerted himself to the utmost to resist the French attacks on the fortress. Again and again Bonaparte's troops rushed to the assault with almost irresistible ardour and courage, and just as often were repulsed by the solid wall of seamen. After sixty days of this bloody but fruitless work, Bonaparte raised the siege and commenced his return to Egypt.[1] Encouraged by this reverse the Ottoman Court now made a desperate effort to recover Egypt, and landed a large army at Aboukir. The troops showed their accustomed valour and contempt for death, but they were badly officered and undisciplined, and Bonaparte had but little difficulty in surprising and utterly defeating them on July 26th, when all their guns and baggage were captured, and the whole force was scattered to the winds. 1799. August.

Soon after this victory Bonaparte learnt for the first time of the French reverses, and at once determined to proceed to France. Without announcing his intention to the army, he left at midnight on August 22nd with Murat, Berthier, and Lannes,[2] sailing on one of the two remaining French frigates, and leaving General Kleber[3] in command in Egypt. After experiencing adverse winds for forty-five days, but being fortunate in avoiding the English fleet, he at length succeeded in reaching Fréjus and was welcomed with the greatest enthusiasm.

It was a moment auspicious for Bonaparte if not for France. Since the *coup d'état* of 1797, the Directory had failed to pacify either the extreme Jacobins or the Constitutionalists, but was still strong enough to crush them both, and the elections of 1798 which strengthened the former party were calmly annulled. The defeats in Germany and Italy then brought discredit on the Government, and the 1799. September.

[1] Thiers, vol. x. p. 298.

[2] Ibid., p. 311.

[3] The importance Bonaparte attached to the possession of Egypt is well shown in a letter to Kleber of August 22nd: "Vous savez apprécier aussi bien que personne Citoyen Général combien la possession de l'Égypte est importante à la France. Cet empire turc qui menace ruiné de tous côtés, s'écroule aujourd'hui et l'évacuation de l'Égypte par la France serait un malheur d'autant plus grand que nous verrions de nos jours, cette belle province en d'autres mains européennes."—*Correspondance de Napoléon I.*, tome v. p. 578.

1799. September. Constitutionalists being returned by a large majority at once proceeded to attack the Directors. As is usual in France when national affairs are unsuccessful, a great outcry arose, not only against the men who had jobbed and blundered, but against the system under which they worked.[1]

The Abbé Siéyès was the leader in this new revolutionary movement, and was elected a Director, Barras alone supporting him, while the three other Directors resigned their seats.[2] But Siéyès required some other force than that of rhetoric to effect his designs, and Bonaparte was the man to supply it. France was carried away with admiration for the great General who had increased her dominions to a greater extent than any of her legitimate rulers had ever done, and the emotional wave of hero worship concealed the unprincipled foundation on which his successes were based. The army both feared and adored him, a combination of feelings which is never seen except in the combatant services.

1799. November. There is a sameness about all French Revolutions. The beginning is dissatisfaction which leads to the intrigues of statesmen, who play to win the support of the military power, and, when that is accomplished, summarily arrest their political opponents, trusting that the people will either accept the new constitution peacefully, or that the military will be able to enforce it. This programme was carefully followed out. On November 9th a portion of the Council of Ancients first conferred on Bonaparte the command of the troops in Paris, and then arranged to meet at St. Cloud in order if possible to prevent excitement in Paris. Barras, who was not favourable to Bonaparte, then resigned, and the two remaining Directors were arrested in the Luxembourg. Next day the Councils met at St. Cloud, the Ancients well knowing what was coming but still attentively listened to an harangue from Bonaparte, who told them he had come to save the Republic, but from what particular danger he did not attempt to

[1] On hearing of the defeats of the French army Bonaparte wrote to the Directory, October 10, 1799, "Je n'ai pas pensé devoir calculer les dangers; je devais me trouver où ma présence pouvait être le plus utile."—*Correspondance*, tome v. p. 578.

[2] Thiers, vol. x. p. 352.

specify.[1] The Five Hundred, on the other hand, were not so docile, and at once took an oath of fidelity to the Constitution. Bonaparte did not waste time arguing, but entered with a party of grenadiers, and his brother, the President of the Assembly, gave the requisite civil authority to the soldiers, who were doubtful whether they ought to use force to the representatives of the Majesty of the Republic. When the orders of their Commander-in-Chief were supported by the eloquent exhortations of the President of the Assembly, the troops no longer hesitated, and the Deputies retired as hastily as possible, each through the nearest aperture.[2] 1799. November.

The new Constitution was a marvellous piece of mechanism, contrived in such a way that while the motive power appeared to come from the nation, in reality it arose entirely from the will of a single dictator. The nation selected 500,000 persons eligible for offices in the Communes who should select 50,000 persons eligible for offices in the Departments, and these again were to elect 5000 persons eligible to places in the Government and Legislature. By this system of decimating it was hoped to damp down any sudden impulse of an irrational populace to return an overwhelming majority of any extreme party. But here the system of election ended, for the actual appointments were to be made by the Central Executive. The Legislative Assembly was divided into three chambers, the first giving shape to the measures proposed by the Executive, the second discussing and discovering the objections to them, and the third simply voting Yes or No without speaking at all after hearing the arguments of the other two. In case any objectionable measure should still survive these various stages, a Senate was created whose members held office for life, which could annul every law infringing upon the Constitution.

The Executive was to consist of a Great Elector and

[1] The address is in the *Correspondance*, tome vi. p. 3.

[2] "Il fallait hasarder un de ces actes audacieux devant lesquels hésitent toujours les usurpateurs César hésita en passant le Rubicon, Cromwell en fermant le parlement. Bonaparte se décide à faire marcher les grenadiers sur l'assemblée."—Thiers, vol. x. p. 381.

1799. November. two Consuls; the former appointing and dismissing the latter, but taking no active part in administration. This Constitution was in fact a marvellous hotch-potch of the machinery of every ancient and modern State carefully arranged to exclude the people from any real power, but whereas in most Constitutions the people are persuaded by the possession of a vote that they have something to do with their own Government, this Constitution of 1799 merely gave them power to elect half a million notables.[1] The Elector was practically an absolute monarch who could choose his own two Ministers, nor was he even controlled by the necessity of choosing them from the party which possessed a majority in the Legislative Chamber as is the case in England. The most modern part of the Constitution was the Senate, an imitation of the Federal judges of the United States, whose duty it is to examine whether every measure passed is conformable to the fundamental laws of the nation.

Siéyès' plan was to prevent both the people and the Elector acquiring supreme power, and if it had been acted upon, the various checks and safeguards would no doubt have effected this object; but Bonaparte had entirely different ideas, and instead of merely nominating two colleagues and then retiring, he usurped the whole executive power, using them merely as advisers. Every one in fact was appointed by the First Consul; every measure had to be initiated by him. In each department there was a Prefect nominated by the Central Power and a nominated Council; under him an officer and nominated Council to transact the local business of the Arrondissement, and even the Maires with their communal Councils were appointed more or less directly by the Central Executive.

Thus had the State, which had shrieked Liberty, Equality,

[1] A Proclamation was issued to the French on December 15, 1799. It is signed by Bonaparte, Siéyès, and Roger Ducos, and states: "La Constitution est fondée sur les vrais principles du gouvernement representatif, sur les droits sacrés de la propriété, de l'égalité, de la liberté. Les pouvoirs qu'elle institue seront forts et stables tels qu'ils doivent être pour garantir les droits des citoyens et les intérêts de l'État. Citoyens, la révolution est fixée aux principes qui l'ont commencee. Elle est finie."—*Correspondance*, vol. vi. p. 25.

Fraternity on all occasions for ten years, built up the most absolute system of autocracy ever known in history. Henceforth for the next fifteen years, when we speak of the Government of France, no effort will be needed to remember if we are referring to a Single Assembly, a Committee of Public Safety, a Convention, or a Directory, for the whole was now the one man Bonaparte. Nevertheless he understood full well that even with the irresistible power of the army behind him he could not govern the country absolutely by force, and so proceeded to take measures to conciliate as far as possible all parties. Cambacérès, a regicide, was made Second Consul; and Lebrun, an official of the late King, was created the third; while men of conspicuous ability, chosen from all classes and parties, were called to serve in the Ministries, Senate, and Councils. Thus he strove to curry favour with the powerful, but he had no mercy on the peasants of the Breton[1] race, who were inclined to dispute the power of his generals, and at once suppressed all the independent journalism of Paris. 1799. December.

At this time the British Cabinet decided not to allow the French army in Egypt to arrange a convention with the Porte and to return to France, but in order to prevent disheartening or offending the Sultan by forcing him to allow his unwelcome visitors to remain, Pitt proposed that Lord Elgin should be instructed to accompany the communication of this intention with some assurance of the willingness of Great Britain to co-operate against the enemy, in order to prevent any evil consequences attending their remaining in Egypt.[2] Another and unforeseen result followed the French invasion of Egypt, its effects being felt even in the distant territory of India. Tippoo, the Sultan of Mysore, had been compelled to yield a considerable portion of his territory by his peace with Lord Cornwallis, and to give up his two sons as hostages. His feelings towards England were not therefore of the most friendly description. The French conquest of Egypt wrought upon his imagination with hopes of their

[1] "Le Gouvernement pardonnera; il fera grâce au repentir; l'indulgence sera entière et absolue; mais il frappera quiconque, après cette déclaration, oserait encore résister à la souveraineté nationale."—Proclamation to the inhabitants of the Western Departments. *Correspondance*, vol. vi. p. 49.

[2] Pitt to Dundas, December 12, 1799. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 204.

1799. December. help, nor were the French agents slow to court his alliance, even investing him with the title of "Citizen Sultan," a mode of description which admirably combined the highest title of extreme democracy with that of oriental autocracy. At the beginning of 1799 Lord Mornington, the Governor-General, attempted to negotiate with Tippoo, but soon found the Sultan was practising the eastern art of procrastination until the aid arrived which France had not only promised but bound herself by a secret treaty to afford.[1]

1799. May. In March therefore a British army of over 30,000 men under General Harris advanced from the coast, and after defeating Tippoo in several encounters besieged him in Seringapatam, the city being taken by assault on May 4th. The Sultan himself fell fighting, his body being discovered wounded in four places under a heap of slain, and with his death ended the war. The whole kingdom was now in the gift of the Governor-General, who divided it between the East India Company, the Nizam, and the Peishwah, and for his services Lord Mornington was raised a step in the Peerage, becoming the Marquis of Wellesley.

His brother, Colonel Arthur Wellesley, held a commission in the Nizam's army, but was practically in command of it, although another officer nominally held that position. There was therefore some confusion between the armies of General Harris and of the Nizam, which caused Wellesley to suggest to the Governor-General that the former should leave as soon as possible after the fall of Seringapatam, and that his own position should be more clearly defined. The Marquis seems to have been greatly influenced by his younger brother, and usually took his advice. The latter wished for a free hand at the scene of operations, and told him, when he wished to superintend matters himself, that he could arrange political matters much better at Madras.

At this early stage in his long and brilliant career Arthur Wellesley, indeed, showed conclusively that he insisted upon having absolute command, and wrote: "I intend to be brought away with the army if any civil servant of the Company is to

[1] Mill considers this was not extraordinary conduct, since he knew that a large army had been levied against him. Wilson does not agree with him, as usual, in a footnote.—Mill and Wilson, "British India," vol. vi. p. 78.

be here, or any person with civil authority who is not under my orders."[1] 1799. May.

He now advised his brother as to the best method of dividing the territories of the Sultan, and suggested that after the family of Tippoo and his sirdars were provided for, the rest should be taken by the three allies, the Company, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas; the former retaining Seringapatam and a safe communication with it from the Carnatic and the sea-coast, since it would be unsafe to establish any independent Government in the conquered territory, and probably lead to war. This advice was taken and acted upon.

While the British Empire was being extended in every quarter of the globe, the Concert of Europe was rapidly coming to an end. Still Pitt's Cabinet did its utmost to keep Thugut in the straight path, and to retain its alliance with Austria. The latter proved a very difficult ally to work with, for although the Court of Vienna had abandoned the extravagant ideas it held in August at the height of the allies' victories, the Emperor was still very anxious to retain the whole of Piedmont during the war, urging that he feared a separate peace between France and Sardinia, but he now undertook to restore the King at the peace.[2] 1799. December.

To this proposal Lord Minto was instructed to reply that since the whole French force was now only 230,000, and was not likely to be increased during the winter, the Austrian forces aided by the exertions of England would be quite equal to the occasion. The indispensable conditions were, however, the immediate restoration of the King of Sardinia, and a full compensation to him from the territory of Genoa, in which case England would enter into a mutual arangement with Austria not "to treat for a separate peace, nor

[1] Arthur Wellesley to Mornington, May 8, 1799. Wellington's "Supplementary Despatches," vol. i. p. 216.

[2] Lord Minto to Grenville, December 1, 1799: "On the point of the immediate restoration of the King of Sardinia to the remainder of Piedmont I find a strong resistance, as the Emperor fears a separate peace between Sardinia and France, so he wishes to retain the military occupation of the whole of Piedmont during the war, undertaking by treaty to restore the King at the peace. I strongly opposed this, and stated that the return of the King to Turin was a point which his Majesty and the Emperor of Russia had much at heart."—F. O. Records, Austria, 57.

1799. December. even separately for a general peace," so long as she adhered to the Concert.[1]

The end of 1799 therefore saw England at war with France, Spain, and Holland; Russia had already decided to retire from the Concert, Prussia was at peace, Austria was only kept in line by the greatest exertions, Naples required the protection of the British fleet, Malta was still unconquered, and it was necessary to cajole the Sultan by promises of assistance to tolerate the presence of the French army in Egypt.

[1] To Lord Minto, December 24, 1799. F. O. Records, Austria, 57.

CHAPTER X

Union of Ireland and England discussed—The Scotch Union—Opinion of successive Viceroys—Opinion of George III.—Catholic Committee hostile—Arguments in favour of Union—Opposition of Dublin Bar—Leading Irishmen willing to be bribed—Hopeful views of Cornwallis and Castlereagh—Opinion of Dublin Press—Heads of measure of Union—No alteration in tithe laws—Pamphlets on the Union—Powers of Parliament to effect Union—Opposition of Bankers and Merchants—Provisions for Catholic Priests—Apathy of the people—Cornwallis dissatisfied with the measures he is forced to adopt—Dublin people do not wish for Union.

THE question of Union of Ireland with England had occupied 1654.
the minds of political thinkers for a century and a half before the British Government finally determined to bring it about. Indeed for a short time during the Commonwealth both Scotland and Ireland had sent thirty members to the Parliaments which met at Westminster in 1654,[1] and afterwards until the Restoration when the old separate constitutions were revived. From this date onwards many writers advocated an Union, noticeably Petty[2] in the "Political Anatomy of Ireland," and Molyneux[3] in a "Case of Ireland being bound by Acts of Parliament in England." The arguments were that since the Parliaments of England could affect Irish trade, and had done so by prohibiting the export of cattle to England, and of woollen goods not only to England but to any country whatever, then the people of Ireland ought to have their representatives in the English Parliament.

The Scotch Union was only agreed to on the condition

[1] The writs were issued by the Lord Protector, and an Ordinance was published for the distribution of elections in Ireland and Scotland. "Parliamentary History," vol. iii. p. 1428.

[2] Sir William Petty, political economist (1623–1687). He was a well-known writer, and published "The Political Anatomy of Ireland" in 1672. Other of his works are "A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions," and Essays in Political Arithmetic.

[3] William Molyneux, Irish philosopher (1656–1698). In 1692 he was returned as one of the representatives of Dublin University, and in 1698 published the work referred to above, by which he is best known.

1699. that the trade restrictions, which fell on Scotland as heavily as on Ireland, were abolished; but four years before the date of that Act, in 1703, both Houses of Parliament in Ireland represented to the Queen that they were in favour of a legislative Union with England. Most of the leading men in Ireland strongly approved of the measure, and if any national feeling existed among the Catholic peasantry it was not apparent, for there was no machinery to stir it up or bring it to the surface.

1798. George III. had also thought of an Union when the House of Commons in Ireland had rejected a money bill, sent to them by the Privy Council, and thus had struck at the whole Constitution as regulated by Poyning's Law.[1] These were merely isolated opinions, but after the surrender of all control of the Irish Parliament, most English statesmen agreed that an Union would soon become necessary, and all the successive Viceroys were in favour of it. On the other hand, many Irish politicians seemed to dread the idea, Grattan opposing the commercial propositions of 1785 chiefly because he saw in them "an intolerance of the Parliamentary Constitution of Ireland, a declaration that the full and free external legislation of the Irish Parliament is incompatible with the British Empire."[2]

The Irish Parliament consisted of the leading county gentlemen who were most closely connected with the English, and who were perfectly willing to support the imperial policy of Great Britain, but were, for the most part, anxious to keep their legislative independence. The reasons for this were many, and were both local and sentimental, and also commercial. Ireland had nothing now to gain commercially, and if her taxation were raised to the level in England it would become a very heavy burden. Again

[1] George III. to North: "That avowed profligacy that the gentlemen of that country seem to despise masking with the name of conscience, must sooner or later oblige this country seriously to consider whether the uniting it to this crown would not be the only means of making both islands flourishing."—Walpole's "George III.," vol. iii. p. 398.

[2] Grattan afterwards employed a most pathetic image when describing his relation towards Irish independence. Alluding to its rise in 1782, and its fall twenty years later, he said: "I sat by its cradle—I followed its hearse" ("Statesmen of the Time of George III.," Brougham, vol. i. p. 265).

an Union would lead, it was feared, to absenteeism and the loss of power of the local gentry, so that the social status of the Members of Parliament would fall, all of which fears have been proved by the experience of a century to have been well founded. Grattan particularly dreaded the consequences if the representatives of Ireland degenerated into disloyal and disreputable political adventurers. Others opposed because their livelihoods, to a great extent, depended upon the presence of the Government in Dublin. In spite of these objections Pitt was anxious to bring about the Union, and to combine it with a measure of relief for the Catholics which would thus conciliate the majority without endangering the Protestant ascendency in the United Kingdom. 1798.

The Catholic Committee were violently hostile, and although no Members of Parliament, excepting Arthur O'Connor and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, had been concerned in the rebellion, there was an ever growing party in the country in favour of an entirely new and independent system of Government. We have only lightly touched upon the formation and growth of the various seditious bodies which ultimately merged into the United Irish Society, but enough has been said to show that the Government were aware of their extent even before the outbreak of the rebellion, and now were conversant with the full details of their organisation and strength. It was therefore obvious that with an active enemy ready to negotiate with the United Irish, with a powerful rebel force who had only been defeated after much bloodshed, but whose leaders were now dead or out of the country, it was a favourable opportunity for the Union to take place before a fresh outbreak could be organised. The Government, indeed, acted with conspicuous promptitude, and commenced at once to organise its forces and to win recruits, and if the measures ultimately adopted were not in keeping with the ideas of political honesty as adopted by the Political Parties and Associations of to-day, they were quite in accordance with the usual standard of ethics of that time. One charge, however, must be mentioned in order to be at once dismissed. It is that the English Government deliberately forced on the rebellion,

1798. in order that they should have an excuse for passing an Act of Union. This was brought forward by Dr. M'Nevin with the greatest confidence, was repeatedly stated by O'Connell years afterwards, and even of late has been made the theme of magazine articles. Now, all the evidence proves that the Government acted with such severity that the result was certain either to render a rebellion impossible by completely disarming the whole country, or to bring on the insurrection before it was organised and the French could land; the central idea was to suppress the conspiracy, but there is not a single sentence in any published letter that could possibly be construed into meaning that any of the measures taken either before or during the rebellion were ordered with the purpose of bringing about such a condition of affairs as would render an Union imperative.

No doubt the successes of the rebels were a powerful argument in favour of Union, but all the evidence shows that the Government did not expect them, and were seriously alarmed at their extent. It is also absurd from a political point of view, apart from the immorality of the transaction, to suppose that statesmen would deliberately encourage insurrection at a time of great national danger, in order to have an excuse for forcing on a measure which they must have expected would be opposed by the majority.

1798. July. The arguments for Union at this date were nevertheless overwhelming. Many of the ablest Irishmen were jealous of the Executive, which was nominated by the English Cabinet, and the Houses of Parliament were by no means prepared to work in a position of subordination to the English wishes. The rebels had shown unmistakably that they could be led and organised by a few enthusiasts to fight against the loyalists; and, above all, a certain section of them were prepared to struggle with the aid of England's enemy for complete separation. It was not likely that a reform of the constituencies, or Catholic emancipation alone, would be sufficient to cause the country to settle down as a loyal province of England, therefore a more comprehensive measure was necessary. But there is no evidence to prove that when Cornwallis assumed office as Viceroy he had any instructions to urge on the question of Union, although he

wrote on July 20th, "Convinced as I am that it is the only measure which can long preserve this country, I will never lose sight of it."[1] 1798. July.

Lord Clare, the Chancellor, had for many years been an earnest advocate for Union, but would not hear of the Roman Catholics sitting in the United Parliament. Most of the legal profession did not agree with him, and the Bar in Dublin was from the first opposed to the Union. They even organised a meeting to protest on December 9, 1798, when Saurin moved that an Union was an innovation dangerous and improper to propose at the present juncture. He was seconded by Spencer, but St. George Daly moved an adjournment for a month, which was seconded by Jameson. Tom Grady and M'Cleland spoke well for the Union, and Ponsonby, Curran, Fletcher, and Howe voted against adjournment but did not speak. On a division 162 were against adjournment and 32 for it,[2] and it is interesting to observe that all the minority except five had attained some reward before 1803. But this is anticipating events, and we must return to the secret correspondence of the Government.

Mr. Marshall wrote to Lord Castlereagh on September 26th that the Union was to be brought forward, and that "the leading points are now under consideration."[3] In spite of this determination it does not appear that the King knew of the intention of the Cabinet at this date, nor did Lord Cornwallis know that the King was strongly opposed to the admission of Catholics into the Imperial Legislature. On October 8th Lord Clare visited Pitt at Holwood, and evidently strongly urged him to bring on a measure of Union without the admission of Catholics, for Mr. Elliot wrote to Lord Castlereagh on October 24th that the Cabinet were against extending the privileges of the Catholic Body at present for fear of the embarrassment which might accrue from a proposition to alter the test laws in England. Mr. 1798. September.

[1] July 20, 1798, "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 365.

[2] Mr. Cooke to Lord Castlereagh, September 10, 1798 (?). (This date is evidently wrong, probably December 10th.) "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 344.

[3] Ibid., p. 411.

1798. November. Pitt had not yet decided on the subject, but said that his judgment "some months ago was favourable to the pretensions of the Catholics."[1] Lord Clare, on the other hand, seems to have considered that he had entirely persuaded Pitt, for he writes: "Mr. Pitt is decided upon it (to bring the measure forward unencumbered with the doctrines of emancipation) and I think he will keep his colleagues steady."[2] Dundas was more decided, and was in favour of an "Union on the broadest basis if the measure shall be deemed feasible on that principle,"[3] but on the same date Cooke wrote to Castlereagh, "As to Union, I think the cry seems generally against it." Three conspicuous Irishmen, Foster the Speaker, Beresford, and Parnell were all opposed to the measure, and deprecated any announcement of the scheme until the leading men in Ireland had been consulted, and in this opinion they were supported by Camden, who wrote to Castlereagh on November 16th that the plan of Union had been sent to Cornwallis, but "that it would have been wiser to have received the voice and the conversation and the influence of some leading characters before this authority had been given."[4]

Pitt at length decided to attempt an Union without admitting the Catholics, but thought that success depended on winning over a few important individuals in Ireland, and Cornwallis accordingly sounded some of the leading politicians. Lord Shannon was disposed to entertain the measure favourably, and Lord Ely (relying on the favour of the Crown in a personal matter) was prepared to give it his utmost support. Lord Pery, the late Speaker, would "not pledge himself hastily against it,"[5] and "should the measure in progress receive such a support from Parliament and from the country as justified perseverance on the part of Ministers he should feel it his duty to surrender his own

[1] Mr. Cooke to Lord Castlereagh. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 403.

[2] Auckland to Cooke, November 8, 1798. Lecky, vol. viii. p. 293.

[3] Elliot to Castlereagh, November 9, 1798. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 431.

[4] Pitt to Cornwallis, November 17th. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 442.

[5] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. i. p. 448.

opinion, and give it his best assistance in the detail." Lord Yelverton, the late Attorney-General, had no hesitation in the matter at all; Lord Kilwarden, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, had no particular objection to raise; and Lord Carleton, the Chief Justice of Common Pleas, saw many difficulties which might disappear. The Duke of Leinster was reserved on the subject, but both the Attorney and Solicitor-Generals were well disposed. The inhabitants of both Munster and Cork were partial to the measure.[1] Both Cornwallis and Castlereagh believed that the measure could be carried through Parliament in spite of the opposition of the Speaker, but the former doubted the efficacy of it when passed, and thought it would not "have been much more difficult to have included the Catholics."[2] 1798. November.

Cornwallis, indeed, who was in favour of a measure on a broad basis, pressed the matter so strongly that Pitt promised that there should be no clause in the Act of Union which should prevent the Catholic Question from being taken up later, and so great was the objection of the Catholics themselves to the present system of Government that most of them, in spite of the decision of the Catholic Committee, were prepared to support any change.[3] This opinion was strongly held by Castlereagh, who hoped the proposed arrangement for the Catholic clergy would reconcile that body, and Dr. Troy, the Archbishop, with most of the other Bishops, were prepared to support the Government.

It was, however, one thing to be certain of the support of those who held valuable appointments or those who hoped to acquire them, and of the Houses of Parliament, of which the Lords were certain to support the Government, and the Commons could easily be managed by a few borough owners, but quite another matter to win the consent of the country. In November the North had made no sign, and Castlereagh writing to Wickham stated, "As a measure connected with the Union nothing would engage the great body of the

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 453. See also "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 26.

[2] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 441.

[3] Cornwallis to Major-General Ross, November 15, 1798. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 436.

1798. November. people of all persuasions so certainly in its support as coupling it with a regulation of tythes which in this country has always been the first substantive object to which all reformers looked."[1]

1798. December. At first the Dublin Press opposed the measure strongly, even those organs usually in favour of the Government considering it as too terribly dangerous to contemplate, but the writers in the newspapers were as willing to be influenced in a substantial way as were the Members of Parliament, the Catholic priests, and the Presbyterian ministers, and early in 1799 Castlereagh wrote to Wickham asking for £5000 in bank notes "to give activity" to the Press.[2]

The Irish Government were now in possession of the heads of the measure of Union which had been sent by the Duke of Portland to Lord Cornwallis on November 16th. There were nine chief clauses: (1) The Kingdoms to be united and the laws of succession to remain unchanged. (2) The British Parliament to be unchanged, and the Irish portion to be settled by an Irish Act. (3) The Irish Peers to have the same privileges as Scotch Peers. (4) All members to take the same oaths as now taken by the British, but such oaths to be subject to alteration by Parliament. (5) The continuation of the Irish Church Establishment. (6) Tariff in the French treaty of commerce with England in 1786 to be adopted as between England and Ireland. The duties might be diminished but never increased, and special provisions to be inserted regarding the export of salt provisions and linen to Great Britain and the Colonies. (7) Revenue and debts. The accounts to be kept separate. Ireland was to pay[3] . . . of the annual amount. (8) The Courts of Justice were to be untouched. Final appeal to the House of Lords. (9) The Great Seal of England to remain, so also the Privy Council in Ireland, or else a Committee of the Privy Council. The Lord Lieutenant to remain but not to be mentioned in the Act. It is thus seen that no tithe alteration was intended, but the supporters of the measure held out a certain hope that a Tithe Bill would be introduced immediately

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 447.

[2] Castlereagh to Wickham, January 2, 1799. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 27.

[3] This was settled at $\frac{2}{17}$ths.

afterwards. Cornwallis was instructed on December 21, 1798, by Portland that the Government intended to press the measure without delay, and to inform their supporters of the fact.[1] At this time the country was still in a very disturbed condition: "The County of Tipperary is much more agitated than it has been, and in Wicklow, Wexford, Kildare, and most parts of King's and Queen's Counties, Carlow and Kilkenny, no Protestant or person suspected to be well affected to Government can venture to sleep in a house that is not protected by the neighbourhood of the soldiery."[2] But the clamour against the Union in Dublin had not yet reached the lower orders, who hated both the British and the Irish Governments, it being very doubtful which they objected to most. 1798. December.

It was now felt to be time for the public to be put in possession of an authoritative and authentic statement of the case for Union, and a pamphlet was written by Cooke the Under-Secretary, but published anonymously, entitled "Arguments for and against an Union between Great Britain and Ireland." This was at once widely read, and the public thus became acquainted with the chief arguments in favour of the measure. The main points dwelt upon were the extra strength which would accrue against France, and the benefits which would be conferred upon trade; the probability that capital would be attracted to the country; and the necessity that the Protestant Church, which now numbered only a minority of adherents in Ireland, should be recognised as the State religion of the majority of the United Kingdom. Above all, Union would prevent the British faction operating in Ireland, as all the party contests would be transferred to England. The Catholics were told that an opening would be left in any plan of Union for their future admission to additional privileges, and that a modus of tithes by which both they and the Dissenters would be essentially relieved would probably accompany an Union.[3]

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 20.

[2] Cornwallis to Portland, "Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 21.

[3] Lecky, vol. viii. pp. 305–311. Before the end of December no less than thirty pamphlets were published on the subject of the Union. A complete list is given by Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 319.

1798. December. The chief arguments against the measure were adduced by the lawyers, who thought the time was not opportune since the kingdom was engaged in warfare, and Ireland was still convulsed from the effects of the rebellion. It was not possible now, it was argued, to take the sense of Irish people on the proposed measure when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and a large English army was quartered in the country. Some of the inducements to accept the measure could easily have been granted without an Union, such as the commutation of tithes, and others were chiefly delusive. Was it to be expected that the Imperial Parliament would protect Irish trade against their rivals the English merchants and manufacturers? On the other hand the Union must cause a great increase in taxation, for in spite of the promise to keep the exchequers separate, it was probable that one day the national debts would be blended. The Parliament it was proposed to abolish had always been a loyal supporter of the British Government, both in its warfare abroad and in the measures adopted to suppress the rebellion. If there were any danger of a desire for separation it was not from the disposition of the gentry or Parliament but from that of the lower classes, who could best be controlled by the residence of the governing classes.

Such were the general arguments brought forward against the proposed Union, but there were also technical legal points raised as to whether the Irish legislature had the power to dissolve itself, and to transfer its functions to another body, without the expressed consent of the people who elected it. Now, the whole history of the Parliament of the British Empire, consisting of the King, Lords and Commons, proves that it has repeatedly altered the Constitution of the country without consulting the people, and by ordinary methods of legislative procedure. Up to this date it had varied and fixed the succession of the Crown, united Scotland to England, settled the duration of Parliament by the triennial and septennial Acts, regulated the doctrine and ritual of the Church, and in fact had shown itself to be omnipotent to alter the Constitution at will.

In this respect the British Parliament differs from most

other Parliaments, who cannot alter the fundamental laws without some especial procedure. In France the laws of the Constitution have been reduced to writing, and according to Article VIII. a majority of each Chamber has the right, either of its own accord or at the demand of the President, to declare that there is a necessity to revise the constitutional laws. When both the Chambers have thus voted separately they are united into a National Assembly, and proceed to the revision, which can only be accomplished by an absolute majority of the members. 1798. December.

In America the difficulty is far greater, for no amendment can be even proposed, except by the vote of two-thirds of both Houses of Congress, or by an application from the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, and no amendment can become law unless it is ratified in three-quarters of the States by both Houses in the local legislatures, or by conventions especially summoned for that purpose. The Constitutions of the German Empire and Belgium are also written, and can only be charged by special methods.

The British Parliament, on the other hand, can as easily alter the very foundation of our Constitution, and reform or abolish the House of Lords or Commons, as it can pass a Railway Bill, and all this it can do without consulting the wishes of the country.

The question, therefore, of the legal power of the British Parliament to incorporate the Irish Legislature into itself, or of the latter to voluntarily dissolve itself, was soon answered. Whether it is wise that Parliament should possess such extensive powers is one thing, but that it does possess them is undoubted. The chief safeguard in this country at the present time against any Act being passed by Parliament contrary to the wishes of the people is the blocking power of the House of Lords, for that body cannot be induced to sanction any great reform until there is no doubt that the opinion of the great majority is not only strongly in favour of it, but that such opinion is not a temporary fleeting one, but has for some years been steadily maintained.

One hundred years ago the position of the House of Lords was different, and it could be more easily controlled by the Ministers, and also by the King. The system of Party was

1798. December. not affected by Political Associations, and the predominant party itself being chiefly determined by the Borough owners, the colour of the Government was but slightly affected by the free votes of the people. When, therefore, the King and his Ministers had settled upon a project, it was easy to gain the consent of the House of Lords, and to secure a majority in the Commons, but the opinion of the nation, if it had one, was extremely difficult for the Ministers to ascertain, and it was still more difficult for the people to make it felt without transgressing the law.

The Act of Union of Ireland may indeed be regarded as an unique measure in our history, in so much that it was initiated and carried entirely by the Executive, who acted without consulting either the English or the Irish nation. We are so accustomed to think of the chief measures of the last century as being the result of continual agitation for years which at length compelled the attention of the Government, that it is difficult to realise that a measure so important as the Act of Union should have been originated in the minds of Ministers, and carried, regardless of the opinion of the country. Indeed, the method of procedure was exactly opposite to anything we have since known. Catholic Emancipation, the Reform Bills, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws, were granted after continual and prolonged efforts, even accompanied by law breaking on the part of the public, but not only was there no agitation in favour of the Act of Union, but it was actually necessary for the Government to exert themselves to obtain enough support in Ireland to carry it with any appearance of decency.

As we have related, active opposition to the measure was at once commenced by the Bar, and this was carried on by the chief bankers and merchants of Dublin, who all expressed the strongest sentiments of loyalty to the King, but considered that an Union would be most dangerous. On the other hand, the manufacturing centres in the North were not so opposed, for the Belfast people thought the Union would be good for their linen trade, while at the other end of the country the inhabitants of Cork hoped their

town would become one of the chief centres for shipping in the United Kingdom. 1799. January.

Nevertheless, on the whole, very little progress in converting the country had been made, and at the commencement of 1799 Cornwallis wrote in a very despondent tone regarding the prospects. Neither Lord Ely nor Lord Downshire could be depended upon, and the Speaker was strong against Union, so that it was considered necessary for the Government, who professed "to encourage discussion, and neither to precipitate Parliament or the country on the decision, much less to force it against the public sentiment," to dismiss those of the "inferior servants of the Crown who were opposed to the measure."[1] Any scruples were overcome, and the first to be removed from office was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Parnell; Lord Ely at the same time receiving a hint in the following words: "Your opposition to a proceeding so reasonable in itself, and which his Majesty's Ministers consider as indispensable to the internal tranquillity of Ireland, and to the security of the Empire, would be considered by the King's servants in both countries as an absolute separation on the part of your Lordship and your friends from all connection with his Majesty's Government."[2] Mr. Pitt, however, had an interview with him, which apparently was satisfactory to that gentleman, for he "gave Lord Ely to understand his objects would be attended to."

But all Irishmen were by no means so easily to be bribed, and Sir John Blackwood, a member of forty years' standing, bluntly informed Castlereagh that he had "the pride of feeling his own independence," a pride he would "not barter for any honour." The Duke of Leinster regretted that he was obliged to oppose any measure that came from the Marquis of Cornwallis. Lord Downshire, in spite of Pitt's persuasion, would not commit himself, but Lord Conyngham was friendly disposed, although very anxious to know if he would be elected one of the twenty-eight Peers for Ireland. The question of the Peers had caused a good deal of dis-

[1] Cornwallis to Portland, January 11, 1799. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 90.

[2] Cornwallis to Ely, January 13, 1799. Ibid., p. 107.

1799. January. cussion, but it had been decided that the Irish Peers should be elected for life, and not for one Parliament, as is the case with the Scotch, because the principle of election for one Parliament only was adverse to the character and constitution of the House of Lords as forming a part of the British Legislature, and also because the Irish peerage was likely to suffer a more rapid diminution than the Scotch, and since the number to be elected was considerably larger, the effect would have been very inconvenient by causing the election of so powerful a body in the House of Lords to be dependent on the cabals possibly of a few individuals.[1] Many individuals were now won over, and the Government worked hard to encourage declarations "from the towns of Limerick, Waterford, Derry, and Newry, as far as they can be obtained without too strong an appearance of Government interference;"[2] at the same time that it endeavoured to counteract, as far as possible, the county meetings against the Union which were extending in those districts.

It was also extremely important to obtain the support if possible of the Catholic priests, as well as that of the Bishops, for which purpose the Government notified to the latter that they were desirous of proposing, without delay, an independent provision for the Roman Catholic clergy under such regulations as they would accept, but they were at the same time informed that their political claims could only be dealt with by the Imperial Parliament. On January 17th, 18th, and 19th, the Bishops deliberated on this proposal, and agreed that it ought to be thankfully accepted, and that such an interference of Government in the appointment of Catholic prelates "as may enable it to be satisfied of the loyalty of the person appointed is just and ought to be agreed to." This State endowment of the Roman Catholics seems, indeed, to have met with the favour of the Catholic Bishops in all three kingdoms at this time, but was undoubtedly chiefly intended as a means of securing support for the Union. Nevertheless, there still seemed considerable doubt both as to the intentions of the Government, and as to

[1] Portland to Cornwallis, December 24, 1798. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 53.

[2] Cornwallis to Portland, January 11, 1799. Ibid., p. 92.

the way in which the Catholics would act. Pitt was sanguine that they would soon acquire political rights after the Union, but the King wrote expressing astonishment at the idea of an established stipend by the authority of Government for the Catholic clergy of Ireland: "I am certain any encouragement to such an idea must give real offence to the Established Church in Ireland as well as to the true friends of our Constitution; for it is certainly creating a second Church Establishment which could not but be highly injurious. The tolerating Dissenters is fair; but the trying to perpetuate a separation in religious opinions, by providing for the support of their clergy as an establishment, is certainly going far beyond the bounds of justice or policy."[1] 1799. January.

M'Nally, who was a keen and accurate observer, now wrote to the Government: "The Orange and Green are making rapid approaches towards each other. The respectable Catholics, however, are determined not to come forward on the question of Union in a body, though individually they are to a man against it." He did not anticipate any riots or active opposition owing to the great military force in the capital.[2] Nor were the Orangemen more favourable, but their lodges in Dublin and in the north agreed to take no part in the discussion, and to leave each individual free to adopt any line he pleased. The Presbyterians were quietly reserved on the subject, and Lord Castlereagh hoped that they were tired of the treason in which they were lately engaged, and might be induced to compromise about the Union if the *regium donum* to their ministers were augmented.

In this way, by persuasion, bribes, promises, threats, and dismissals from office, was the country prepared for a measure which has had a greater and more lasting effect for a whole century than any in the Statute-Book. But the most extraordinary part of the whole proceedings was the apathy of the people towards a measure of such importance. A nation which had deliberately organised itself into a great treasonable society, at first for the purpose of obtaining redress of

[1] George III. to Mr. Pitt, January 24, 1799. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii., Appendix, p. 18.

[2] J. W., January 2, 1799. Lecky, vol. viii p. 335.

1799. January. grievances, and then of throwing off the rule of England with the aid of her enemy, quietly witnessed the bonds of Union more closely tied, and merely entered mild protests. It is true the terrible retribution which the rebels had brought upon themselves was fresh in their memory, and a great military force existed in the country.

The United Irish movement had collapsed with the arrest of the Directors and the suppression of the rebellion, but still it would have been possible to assemble in large numbers and agitate against the measure if any strong feeling really existed. The apathy of the people on such a great national question as Union is, I think, the strongest proof that the rebellion was not at first a patriotic movement at all, but rather was caused by military excesses, accentuated by religious fanaticism, and that the Irish did not really wish to be separated entirely from England but were only worked up by the leaders of the United Irish to prepare to fight the King's troops by promises of Catholic Emancipation and tithe reforms. Nothing is so difficult as to estimate the feelings of the people on particular questions, either at the present moment or in the past. Government correspondence merely consists of the opinions of those who are not in a good position to estimate the workings of the minds of the lower classes, and whose information is derived from people who often think it their duty to make the case look as favourable as possible to their employers. The addresses which were dictated at the Castle, and afterwards voted by the Councils of certain Boroughs, are obviously no indication of popular feeling at all; and the opinions of the gentry, officers, and priests were also likely to be merely the outcome of a few events which impressed them. The Press at this time was by no means a safe guide, as it was largely in the pay of the Government, but on the whole we are forced to conclude that most of the population of Ireland were absolutely indifferent whether the Parliament sat at Dublin or at Westminster. The Viceroy seems to have thought that means were being taken to rouse the lower classes, but there is no evidence to support this idea. "There newed activity of the disaffected has not yet been productive of any open effort. With what immediate view this attempt, which

has been very general, was made to set the lower orders in motion, it is difficult to trace. I have no reason to believe that it was occasioned by any feelings arising out of the question of Union. In the North an idea of co-operation from abroad prevailed, and this expectation may have been connected with the preparations going forward in the Texel."[1] 1799. January.

The chief active opposition was maintained by the lawyers, and Mr. Saurin was now endeavouring to bring pressure on the Government by causing the officers of the various yeomanry corps in Dublin to sign a paper stating their determination to lay down their arms in case the measure of Union was brought forward; and in the first week in January Sir William Worthington, commanding the Liberty Rangers, Dublin, ordered his corps to parade on January 21st with the King's colour, but instead of the regimental colour a standard on which was inscribed, "For our King and the Constitution of Ireland." The Government steadily persevered, and a scheme of Union was now sent by Castlereagh to the Press, announcing the chief provisions of the proposed Act, and mentioning that twenty-eight Temporal and four Spiritual Peers were to sit in the Imperial Parliament, and that the number of the Commons was not to exceed one hundred.

The conduct of Mr. Saurin in thus mixing up military with political affairs brought from the Duke of Portland an instruction that he should be deprived of his silk gown, but Castlereagh wrote and stated that he thought he would not persevere in his intention of laying down his arms, and so the order was suspended. It was now the eve of the meeting of Parliament, and Lord Cornwallis wrote: "The demands of our friends rise in proportion to the appearance of strength on the other side; and you who know how I detest a job will be sensible of the difficulties which I must often have to keep my temper; but still the object is great, and perhaps the salvation of the British Empire may depend upon it."[2]

[1] January 2, 1799, Cornwallis to Portland. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 28. The Dutch fleet assembled under Admiral Storey, and surrendered to the English under Admiral Mitchell on August 31, 1799.

[2] To Major-General Ross. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 39.

1799. January. He thought the south of Ireland was well disposed to Union, the north in a state of neutrality or "rather apathy on the subject which is to me incomprehensible; but all the counties in the middle of the island from Dublin to Galway are violent against it." But whatever may have been the real opinion of the country on the question of a legislative Union, there is no doubt that a very strong opposition existed to tithes, and a strong inclination among the lower class Catholics in favour of the establishment of Popery, while in Dublin, at least, the bulk of the population were strongly averse to an Union in any form.

CHAPTER XI

The Income tax of 1798—King's speech in the Irish Parliament—Debate on the Union—Government barely escape defeat—Hostility of Mr. Speaker Foster—Opinion of Pitt in January 1799—King's opinion regarding the Church—Sheridan opposes Union—Resolutions for Union moved by Pitt—Necessity to pass the measure at once—Larger towns more reconciled—Outrages in Mayo, Galway, and Meath—Coercion Act passed—Rewards of peerages offered for support—Borough owners compensated—Cornwallis despondent—Last session of Irish Parliament opens January 1800—Grattan returns to his place—Opinions of Press—Resolution for an Union passed by 161 to 115 votes—Fox's reasons for not attending Parliament—Termination of Union debates in Irish House of Commons—The Royal Assent on August 1, 1800.

1798. November.

The British Parliament met on November 25, 1798, and after the usual debate on the King's speech Pitt brought forward his financial proposals. He estimated the necessary expenditure for the year at £29,272,000, and stated that Land and Malt, the Lottery, the Consolidated Fund, and the tax laid in the last session upon exports and imports would produce little more than six millions, leaving more than twenty-three millions to be raised. In order to act upon his fundamental principle of not relying more upon loan than was absolutely necessary, and not more than could be defrayed by a temporary tax within a limited time, he proposed, in place of the former Assessed Taxes, an innovation in the shape of an Income Tax. The scale was to begin at £60 a year, at which point $\frac{1}{120}$ was to be taken, and this was to be increased by small fractions on all incomes up to £200 a year, on which and all greater incomes 10 per cent. was to be levied, whether they were fixed, as from land, or fluctuating, as from a profession.[1] It is interesting to note that Pitt estimated the annual rents of lands and houses, tithes and mines, the profits of trades and professions, the payment of the funds and all other sources of incomes at one hundred and two millions, so that the tax at 10 per cent. was calcu-

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. pp. 1–24.

1798. November. lated to yield over ten millions. In 1898, one hundred years after this date, the revenue derived from Incomes, Property, House Duty, and Land Tax reached the sum of £17,000,000, which at 8d. in the £1 means a gross value of £510,000,000, or exactly five times the amount estimated by Pitt.

The income tax was opposed by Mr. Tierney, who thought it would press unduly on the landed interests,[1] and by Mr. William Smith,[2] who considered that the country gentlemen who did not work and were useless beings, ought to pay more than the manufacturing classes. The Bill, however, passed the second reading by 183 to 17, and having been read a third time, on the last day of December, soon passed the House of Lords without a division. The Habeas Corpus Act was again suspended, after some debate on the treatment of prisoners, and then every one nerved himself for the struggle on the question of Union with Ireland.

1799. January. The Irish Parliament met on January 22nd, and the Union was immediately discussed in the debate on the King's speech which "recommended some permanent adjustment, which may extend the advantages enjoyed by our sister kingdom to every part of this island," and provide for the most effectual means of maintaining and improving the connection. The Address was moved by Lord Tyrone, the eldest son of Lord Waterford, who pointed out that it pledged the House to nothing more than a discussion of the question of Union, but it was strongly opposed by Sir John Parnell and George Ponsonby, who moved an amendment, pledging the House to consider the best means of strengthening the Empire, while still maintaining "the birthright of the people of Ireland to have a resident and independent Legislature such as was recognised by the British Legislature in 1782."

A debate followed lasting twenty hours, in which Lord Castlereagh was supported by Sir John Blaquiere, the Knight of Kerry, and a son of one of the Barons of the Exchequer named William Smith. The Government was opposed by Sir Henry Parnell, Plunket, George Ponsonby,

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 23.
[2] Ibid., p. 96.

Dobbs, Barrington, Parsons, Hardy, and Fitzgerald, who had been dismissed from his office as Prime Sergeant for his hostility to the Union. The chief argument was that the country was hostile to the scheme, and that, as Plunket stated, "within these six last weeks a system of black corruption had been carried on within the walls of the Castle, which would disgrace the annals of the worst period of the history of either country." Now, although there is certainly no evidence that the country wished for the measure, there is but little more that it was very hostile to it, but that corruption had taken place is undoubtedly true. It is even stated that one member during the debate was suddenly converted by a promise of a peerage, and another supporter of the Government received his commission as a colonel the day before the division.[1] 1799. January.

The Amendment was ultimately rejected by 106 to 105 votes, and the original Address carried by 107 to 105, which was not an encouraging beginning. In the House of Lords the Government were, however, easily victorious by 52 to 17. The Duke of Leinster and Lord Pery were in the minority, and Lord Ely did not vote. When the report of the Address went before the Commons, another severe contest took place between Lord Castlereagh and William Smith on the one side, and George Ponsonby and Sir Laurence Parsons on the other, and in the division 111 members voted for expunging the clause relating to the Union, and 106 only supported it. This defeat was largely due to the immense influence of the Speaker, Foster, who took no part in the debate, but was known to be strongly hostile. His opinion was regarded with the greatest respect, and was so firmly held that it was useless attempting to bribe him, and thus it carried far more weight than that of Ponsonby, who had usually been in opposition. Now appeared some indication of the popular objection to the measure, for the mob in Dublin was fiercely jubilant at the result, and expressed its satisfaction in the usual manner by bonfires and illuminations. Lord Castlereagh, nevertheless, attributed the defeat chiefly to the opposi-

[1] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 343. "All means were devised and attempted by both parties to gain proselytes to their respective opinions."—Plowden, vol. ii. part ii. p. 823.

1799. January. tion of the country gentlemen, of whom twice as many voted against the measure as for it.[1]

The Government in England seems to have been under several misapprehensions, and considering the rapidity with which the measure was hurried on, it is not surprising. The following account shows the opinion of Pitt, and it is interesting to notice that in nearly every respect what he thought, intended, and expected would happen, did not do so. On January 26th Wilberforce wrote in his diary, "Pitt sanguine that after Union Roman Catholics would soon acquire political rights, resolved to give up plan rather than exclude them. If Irish House did not pass something violent on Tuesday last he thinks it will go down. Pitt fair and honourable as always more than any other political man. Poor Burgh wild, Bankes clear and strong against it, Auckland evidently so secretly. Lord Clare for. Speaker now for and satisfied. I hear the Roman Catholics more against it than they were. The Bishops all against Pitt's tithe plan. The King said, 'I am for it if it is for the good of the Church, against it if contra.'"[2] This was written before the news had reached London of the refusal of the Irish Commons to discuss the measure, but already, on the same day that the Irish Parliament opened, the King had sent a message to both Houses in England, recommending them to consider the best means of consolidating the strength, power, and resources of the British Empire. Mr. Dundas then presented to the House sealed up copies and extracts of papers containing secret information of a treasonable conspiracy in Great Britain and Ireland. He afterwards moved the Address in answer to his Majesty's speech, and stated that at present he considered it unnecessary to do more than move an address of thanks. Mr. Sheridan, now, since the death of Burke, the greatest Irish orator in the House, at once attacked the proposal with great vigour. He wished to know why the last solemn and final adjustment had not answered the purposes for which it was intended; and proceeded, "The next point which I shall endeavour to establish is, that an Union at present without

[1] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 133.
[2] "Life of Wilberforce," by his Son, p. 205.

the unequivocal sense of the Irish people in its favour; that an Union effected by fraud, by intrigue, by corruption, by intimidation, would ultimately tend to endanger the connection between the two countries."[1] He then pointed out that the next rebellion in Ireland, if one occurred, would have a colour and plausibility far different to the last. The people would rise for their independence, of which they would have been deprived without their consent. Finally he concluded by moving an amendment expressing surprise and regret that the final adjustment of 1782 had not produced the effects intended, and imploring his Majesty not to listen to the counsels of those who shall advise or promote a measure of Union, "at the present crisis, and under the present circumstances of the Empire."[2] Mr. Canning followed, and ingeniously pointed out that if an Union would quiet the agitation of that country and restore it to rest, why should they wait till the struggle was over before they administered the remedy? Mr. Pitt now stated that the House was only asked to assure his Majesty that they would take into consideration the subject which was recommended to their care. He was not in a position to lay before them a detailed statement of the plan then, but would do so hereafter. The Amendment was then negatived without a division, and the motion for the Address carried. 1799. January.

As soon as he heard of the fate of the measure in the Irish Parliament, Pitt at once wrote to Lord Cornwallis stating he was "disappointed and grieved to find that a measure so essential was frustrated for the time, by the effect of prejudice and cabal," but expressing no doubt of the ultimate result. He continued as follows: "The measure is one which we cannot lose sight of, but must make the grand and primary object of all our policy with respect to Ireland. In this view it seems very desirable, if Government is strong enough to do it without too much immediate hazard, to mark by dismissal the sense entertained of the conduct of those persons in office who opposed. In particular it strikes me as essential not to make an exception to this line in the

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 213.
[2] Ibid., p. 224. [3] Ibid., p. 225.

1799. January. instance of the Speaker's son. No Government can stand on a safe and respectable ground which does not show it feels itself independent of him."[1] The letter concluded by stating that whatever may have passed in Ireland would make no difference in their intention to proceed in England.

A few days after, on January 31st, Pitt moved the resolutions for an Union in a long and elaborate speech.[2] He admitted the full right of the Irish Parliament to accept or reject an Union, but while the House of Lords had agreed to discuss it, the House of Commons had refused to consider it, even before the nature of the measure had been disclosed. He continued: "Supposing, for instance, that the present war, which the Parliament of Great Britain considers to be just and necessary, had been voted by the Irish Parliament to be unjust, unnecessary, extravagant, and hostile to the principles of humanity and freedom, would that Parliament have been bound by this country? If not, what security have we, at a moment the most important to our common interest and common salvation, that the two kingdoms should have but one friend and one foe?"[3] It was a question on which passion and prejudice and mistaken national pride was singularly liable to act with strength, but he was convinced that when the advantages were fully appreciated, it was only necessary to secure its adoption "that it should be left to the dispassionate and sober judgment of the Parliament of Ireland." He pointed out that it was not satisfactory or safe to have two independent legislatures while the executive remained the same in the two countries, and noted that commercial jealousies must exist when the Irish, as in 1785, could refuse a treaty connection. He then touched on the danger of the Established Church being supported only by a minority, and said, "No man can say that in the present state of things, and while Ireland remains a separate kingdom, full concessions could be made to the Catholics without endangering the State and shaking the Constitution of Ireland to its

[1] Pitt to Cornwallis, January 26, 1799. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 170.

[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 254.

[3] Ibid., p. 266.

centre."[1] Without pledging the Government to admit the Catholics to the privileges enjoyed by those of the established religion, he continued, "Many of the objections which at present arise out of their situation would be removed if the Protestant legislature were no longer separate and local but general and imperial;" that, and the question of relieving the lower orders from the pressure of tithes, "are more likely to be settled by an united legislature." He then answered the objections which had been urged to the measure that the people of Ireland had not been consulted, and that the Parliament of Ireland was incompetent to entertain and discuss the question without having previously obtained the consent of their constituents. "I will assume that no man can deny the competency of the Parliament of Ireland (representing as it does, in the language of our Constitution, "lawfully, fully and freely, all the estates of the people of the realm,") to make laws to bind that people, unless he is disposed to distinguish that Parliament from the Parliament of Great Britain." The idea that the Parliament had not these powers "may in fact be traced to that gross perversion of the principles of all political society which rest on the supposition that there exists continually, in every Government, a sovereignty in abeyance (as it were) on the part of the people ready to be called forth on every occasion, or rather on every pretence, when it may suit the purposes of the party or faction who are the advocates of this doctrine to suppose an occasion for its exertion."[2] 1799. January.

At the conclusion of his speech Pitt laid the resolutions before the House, embodying the principles of Union.[3]

Mr. Sheridan opposed the measure, chiefly because the time seemed unsuitable, but Lord Hawkesbury supported it, stating that even if the attempt for Union failed "it would be the means of recording upon the journals a lasting monument of what the House was willing to advance to promote the interests of Ireland, and give additional strength and security to the Empire."

The question that his Majesty's message should be con-

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 272.
[2] Ibid., p. 281.
[3] Ibid., p. 289.

1799. January. sidered by a committee of the whole House was then carried by 140 to 15.[1]

In spite of the active Opposition in Parliament and in Dublin the Ministers were determined to persevere with the measure. Indeed the necessity for it seemed to be even more important now, for there were signs that unless it were speedily carried the Catholics and Protestants might unite and speedily pass measures of emancipation, and regulate the tithes, without waiting for the British Parliament to act, and thus deprive the Government of the chief levers in their possession. Another point was the compensation to borough owners, which at first, it was hoped, might be avoided, but Castlereagh was now convinced must be conceded, for there were eighty-six boroughs which could be considered absolutely as private property.[2] With a coalescence of the Catholics and Protestants, and a French invasion, the danger of losing Ireland might have been very great indeed. It was therefore necessary to act speedily.

The leading clerical and lay leaders of the Catholics were undoubtedly firm in their support of the Government, and in spite of the fact that the question of payment to the priests was postponed at present, they were still prepared to treat with Castlereagh when he was ready to settle the matter. The larger towns seemed to be growing more reconciled to the measure, but there was considerable discontent in several parts of the country, and the old crime of houghing cattle broke out in Mayo, Galway, and Meath. There is considerable doubt, however, as to the cause of these outrages, nor is there any evidence to connect them with the opposition to Union. Cornwallis, indeed, thought they might be organised by the United Irish, but whatever may have been the cause it was impossible to obtain justice in certain parts, for jurymen were constantly intimidated and murders were very frequent,

1799. March. especially in the neighbourhood of Dublin. In March, in the county of Cork, a tithe war was raging, accompanied by the most cruel persecution of the collectors; and Cornwallis, considering this part of the country to be the most agitated, inferred that an invasion was most likely to take place there.

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 321.

[2] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. ii. pp. 119–153.

1799. March.

There was also evidence pointing to the fact that the United Irish were still plotting in Dublin, and that the lower ranks of the Catholics, governed by their priests, were actuated by a fierce religious fanaticism. It was therefore considered necessary to pass a Coercion Act, empowering the Lord Lieutenant to enforce martial law in spite of the fact that the ordinary Courts of Justice were open, and to authorise the punishment by death or otherwise of all persons assisting in the rebellion, or attacking the persons or properties of the King's loyal subjects.[1] The Bill met with some opposition in the House of Commons, and it was ultimately decided that it should expire two months after the opening of the ensuing session of Parliament. One of the most powerful arguments for the Union was that the Parliament of Ireland might again differ from that of England over a measure of Imperial importance, such as the Regency Bill of 1789, and in order to remove this particular objection to two legislatures the Opposition introduced a Bill to regulate the matter, which enacted that the Regent of England should be always Regent with the same powers in Ireland. This passed through its earlier stages, but was ultimately postponed until the session had closed. During the debates on this question Castlereagh used an argument which, curiously enough, has often since been advanced but has never yet been acted upon. He said, "How was it possible to conceive that the Empire could continue as at present, whilst all parts of it were to receive equal protection, and only one part of it is to suffer the burdens of that protection. Must we not of necessity and in justice look to some settlement of Imperial contribution?"

It is manifestly the duty of a mother to protect her sons and daughters until they are strong enough to protect themselves; and the British mother, regarding the Colonies as her children, cannot help a feeling of pride when she looks at a map of the world and recognises the enormous tracts of country acquired and secured entirely at her expense. But when they grow old and strong enough to help the parent country it is only just that they should do so, either by discriminating tariffs for her goods, or by helping her with

[1] 39 George III., c. ii.

1799. March. contributions of war-ships or troops. At the end of the eighteenth century this enlightened policy was in its infancy, and although Scotland had been admitted as part of Great Britain, Ireland and the Colonies were still regarded more in the light of tributary possessions than as loyal children. But while the Colonies in North America had successfully protested against such treatment, and cut themselves off from the mother country, the proximity of Ireland to England rendered it absolutely imperative that the two countries should be firmly united in every way against the possibility of Continental aggression.

1799. April. On the other hand, Foster, as an opponent of Union, argued strongly that the present Constitution was a sufficient safeguard, that the two countries would always act together in the future as they had done in the past. It was true that two independent legislatures might clash in operation; but recent legislation, since the commercial propositions of 1785, had shown that the Irish had tried with considerable success to bring their laws into conformity with the English. He argued that the removal of a loyal Parliament would give a new encouragement to disaffection, and would lead to increased taxation and absenteeism; nor would an Imperial Parliament be able to deal with such a danger as rebellion so successfully as had the legislature which sat in Dublin. In spite of such forcible arguments the feeling in favour of Union was undoubtedly growing among the men of weight and character in both countries, and in April an address passed through both Houses of the British Parliament with very little opposition.

It was, however, still necessary to secure a majority in Ireland, and in order to do this various rewards were offered. During the Viceroyalty of Lord Cornwallis not less than twenty-eight Irish peerages were created, six Irish peers were promoted to the English peerage, and twenty were raised to a higher rank. Of these only seven Irish and one English peer were created for services unconnected with the Union.[1] The borough owners were compensated at the rate of £15,000 for each borough, the total amounting to the large sum of £1,260,000, which was added to the National Debt. It is

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," pp. 318–319.

noticeable that many boroughs were owned by several individuals; in Monaghan, for instance, the £15,000 was divided between four patrons, who each received £3500. The largest amount went to Lord Downshire, a strong opponent of the Union, who obtained £52,500; and Lord Ely came next with £45,000. A few boroughs were in the gift of the Bishops, and in these cases the compensation went to First Fruits Fund.[1] 1799. April.

The Government did not intend to dissolve Parliament, and it was therefore necessary to alter the composition of the Commons in order to secure a working majority. Various devices were invented for this purpose. In some cases men were induced to vacate their seats by the offer of lucrative appointments, in others officials were dismissed for opposing the Union, but in all the new members were pledged to support the Government. In this manner and by the conversion of the borough patrons, before the House met in January 1800, Castlereagh was able to state. "We reckon at present on 180 supporters. Of the other 120, 85 are hostile and the politics of 35 are not distinctly ascertained."[2] In this letter he asks for more assistance to influence the Press in the same way and to the same extent as before, as the advantages had been important, and stated that it was very desirable that the request should be complied with without delay.[3] 1799. December.

Cornwallis was not nearly so sanguine, and on December 28th wrote: "I entertain every day more doubt of our success in the great question of Union. We have a lukewarm, and in some cases an unwilling majority; the enemy has a bold and deeply interested minority which will, I am afraid, even after our friends are reckoned, run us much nearer than most people expect."[4] If there were doubts as to the opinion of the House of Commons, it was still more difficult for the Government to estimate the true opinion of the country, for there were so many causes of discontent and faction on the one hand, and so much of 1799. July.

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. pp. 321–322.
[2] Castlereagh to Portland. Ibid., p. 151.
[3] The sum on the previous occasion had been £5000.
[4] Cornwallis to Portland. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 151.

1799. July. martial law on the other, that the people were either rendered desperate, and committed grievous crimes, or were passively resigned. Cornwallis himself was somewhat pessimistic, but his opinion varies so strongly from day to day that it is impossible not to ascribe it as due chiefly to his own feelings at the moment of writing. In July he went on a tour in the South of Ireland, and wrote in August: "I am happy to have it in my power to convey to your Grace the most satisfactory accounts of that part of the kingdom, as well in point of tranquillity as in general good disposition towards the Government, and cordial approbation of the measure of Union." [1]

1799. October. At this time Pitt was anxious for an early session in order to impose an income tax on Ireland, but the Viceroy thought it would not be advisable, and the idea was therefore dropped. In October Lord Cornwallis made a tour in the North, and on his return wrote: "Although a change of political circumstances and the temper of the times will often affect the general opinions of the multitude, and it is therefore unsafe to trust entirely to appearances, yet from my reception in the North there is certainly reason to entertain sanguine hopes of the good disposition of the people in that part of this kingdom towards the very important measure of a legislative Union with Great Britain." [2]

A few boroughs, under the influence of the noblemen who controlled their representation, even presented addresses in favour of the measure, but these were only a very small fraction of the whole number in the country. Of the counties, Connaught, Mayo, and Galway seem to have been the least hostile, and Kerry and Waterford were also disposed to welcome the measure. There is also little doubt that the leading Catholics,[3] both clergy and laity, were in favour of the measure, and the Bishops of the Protestant Church supported it. The United Irish conspiracy was now leaderless, but Lewins, who was in Paris, wrote to the French Government, stating that if they allowed the Union to take place it would greatly strengthen their

[1] Cornwallis to Portland. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 121.
[2] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 138.
[3] Plowden, vol. ii. p. 979.

enemy both financially and from a military standpoint. He indeed sent over O'Mealy to England to communicate with the rebels, but as usual with Irish conspirators he met with a spy to whom he related the whole plot, which was soon told to the Government.[1] 1799. October.

Meanwhile in England the measure was being aided by every means in the power of the Government. The King was much in favour of the scheme, but said to Dundas, "I only hope Government is not pledged to anything in favour of the Roman Catholics." "No," the Minister answered, "it will be a matter for future consideration."[2] The sealed papers which Mr. Dundas had presented to the House of Commons on January 23rd were referred to a Select Committee, who reported in March that they had found the clearest proofs of a conspiracy with France to overturn the laws and constitution both in Great Britain and Ireland. One might think that the House of Commons was so used to conspiracies and reports of secret committees that they would be little affected by them, but nevertheless a Bill was prepared and passed in April,[3] punishing with a fine, or by imprisonment, any member of the "Corresponding Society," the "United Irishmen," the "United Englishmen," or of any other secret society. Proprietors of printing presses were required to take out licenses, and the names of the printers were to appear on every copy of every book or paper issued. In Ireland most of the country was under military law, and English troops were continually arriving, so that by the autumn a large and quite irresistible army was quartered there. 1799.

The last session of the Irish Parliament was opened on January 15, 1800, with a long speech from the throne, which however did not contain any allusion to the great question which it was now intended to settle as soon as possible. The Government were not indeed prepared to introduce it immediately, since in the process of remodelling the 1800. January.

[1] Lecky, vol. viii. p. 430.

[2] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 178.

[3] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 984. Mr. Tierney said "a report less supported by evidence, I believe, was never made to this House."

1800. January. borough representation, as stated above, many supporters were still to be substituted for opponents of the Union, and in the first few days thirty-nine writs were issued.[1] The House being thus deprived of many of the supporters of the Government, the opportunity was seized by the Opposition, who brought in an Amendment, pledging it to maintain the independence of the Irish Parliament, as settled in 1782, "at all times, and particularly at the present moment."[2] This was moved by Sir Lawrence Parsons, and the debate which followed lasted for eighteen hours, in which Lord Castlereagh met the violent attack with great calmness. The Government were accused of promising bribes to the Catholic and Presbyterian clergy, and of using the patronage of the Crown in favour of the supporters of the measure. Absentee proprietors were credited with the threat to eject their tenants who refused to sign petitions for the Union, and it was stated that every means had been taken to stifle opposition by the powers of martial law, but in spite of all this only about 5000 signatures had been obtained in favour of the measure. Plunket, Ponsonby, Fitzgerald, and Arthur Moore argued in this strain, and warned the Government that an Act of Union carried by such means and at such a time would not be acquiesced in, and would lead to disloyalty and agitation. Towards the end of the debate the Opposition was greatly strengthened by the reappearance of Grattan, who, weak and ill though he was, had been induced at the last moment to return to Parliament. One of the members for Wicklow had died and the seat had been purchased. The election was then hurried through on the night of the 15th, and the greatest of Irish orators walked into the House at 7 A.M. the next day. His speech of nearly two hours produced a great effect but did not influence the votes, and at ten o'clock the Amendment was rejected by 138 to 96. This result greatly cheered the Government, but still the Opposition was active outside Parliament, the Guild of Merchants entering strong resolutions against the Union, while most seditious hand-bills were circulated, calling upon the yeomanry, both Orange

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 164.
[2] Ibid., vol. iii. p. 163.

and Catholic, to form one bond of opposition, and reminding them that no Government could wrest the Parliament from 60,000 armed and tried men.[1] A letter was now sent, signed by Lords Downshire and Charlemont and Mr. W. Ponsonby, to Castlereagh, stating that a number of gentlemen of both Houses of Parliament, of whom thirty-eight represented counties, had authorised them to acquaint him that in their opinion a petition to Parliament declaring the real sense of the freeholders of the kingdom on the subject of a Legislative Union would at this time be highly expedient.[2] 1800. January

Although this action was a perfectly legitimate and moderate one to take, the Government were greatly incensed at it, and the Duke of Portland instructed Cornwallis to remove Lord Downshire from the government of the county of Down, to erase his name from the Privy Council, and to take away his command of the regiment of which he was colonel.[3] At the same time the Home Secretary informed the Viceroy, "There is no assistance of any kind which the Government of this country can afford your Excellency that you may not depend upon." In spite of this high-handed proceeding petitions poured in against the Union from all parts of the country, and Cornwallis became alarmed not only for the success of the measure but also at the possibility of a rebellion. "Every engine is at work to irritate the minds of the people, and to carry the opposition to the measure beyond constitutional bounds." "The clamour against the Union is increasing rapidly, and every degree of violence is to be expected," he wrote. There seems to have been little ground for such fears, for the military strength in the country rendered it very unlikely that the people would rebel again, but the Viceroy was always inclined to regard dangers in their worst light, in which he absolutely differed from his Secretary, Castlereagh, who was cool and optimistic to a remarkable degree.

It was necessary now to settle finally the clauses of the Act, but the only fundamental change from the original draft

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 158.
[2] Ibid., p. 170. [3] Ibid., p. 188.

1800. January. related to the Church Establishment. The Archbishop of Cashel insisted that the Churches of England and Ireland should be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called the United Church of England and Ireland, and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government should remain in force, "for ever as the same are now by law established for the Church of England." This was drawn up as the fifth article of the Treaty of Union.

1800. February. On February 5th a measure was read from the Lord Lieutenant, recommending on the part of the King a legislative Union, and Lord Castlereagh at once rose and moved it should be taken into consideration. In a long and able speech he traversed the arguments in favour of the measure, pointing out that the vast majority of the owners of property were supporters of it, and that most of the commercial towns were on the same side. Although Parliament should consult, in some measure, the great majority of those whose stake in the property and interests of the country give them a fair claim to consideration, it should never suffer "any temporary and artificial clamour to intimidate it." The taxation of the two countries was to be arranged in the proportion of 15 to 2, and this was to be maintained for twenty years unchanged, but after that time the Imperial Parliament might alter it according to their relative ability to contribute. Castlereagh then laboured to show that the burden of taxation would be less for Ireland after than before the Union, and pointed out that the commercial claims were based on the propositions of 1785, which had been so powerfully defended by the chief opponent to Union, Mr. Foster.

In order to give the Irish manufacturers an advantage over the English a duty of 10 per cent. was imposed which, with the cost of the freight estimated at $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., was amply sufficient, but the Government hoped that at some future date the Imperial Parliament might diminish the protection until the two countries were left to a free competition. Ireland was to be represented by twenty-eight temporal peers elected for life, and four spiritual peers sitting in rotation. To the House of Commons she was to send sixty-four county and thirty-six borough members repre-

senting the chief cities and towns, and the University of Dublin. 1800. February.

The opponents of the measure then advanced the usual arguments, and on a division, after a debate lasting twenty hours, the Government were supported by 158 votes and opposed by 115. This was the largest division ever known in the House of Commons of Ireland, but although there was a majority of 43, which exceeded that of January 16th by one vote, there was really a serious retrocession, for at the earlier date many of the Government seats were vacant. Twelve of their supporters had indeed seceded to the Opposition. One member, Colonel Bagwell, with two more of the same name, changed sides, although the "objects he solicited were promised him;" another, Mr. Whaley, was "bought by the Opposition stock purse; he received £2000 down, and is to have as much more."[1] The Opposition, indeed, endeavoured to fight the Government with weapons of its own choosing, and Cornwallis stated that they were able to offer £5000 for a single vote. In the Lords, after a speech of four hours' duration by the Chancellor, the Government were supported by 75 against 26 votes. Lord Downshire was the chief speaker in opposition, and bitterly resented being denounced as if he were a seditious man because he had signed the letter missive to Castlereagh, for he had only acted as "an independent gentleman of Ireland."

The newspapers in England at this time followed their party leaders, but the interest in the measure, outside political circles, seems to have been very small. The *Times* supported the Union; "little doubt can be entertained of the success of that just and salutary measure which has been proposed for the termination of many evils in the incorporation of both kingdoms."[2] "The city of Dublin was considerably agitated during the whole time of the debate, and there is every reason to believe that tumult would have ensued had the military force not been so great."[3] On the other hand, the *Morning Post* and *Gazetteer* opposed strongly. "The Marquis of Downshire and all the Orange faction in Ireland are now Jacobin because they

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 182.
[2] January 16, 1800. [3] February 10, 1800.

1800. February. resist the Union! It well becomes the Irish Ministers to brand infamy on their opponents for administering bribes."[1] The Dublin organ, *Saunder's News Letter*, strongly opposed and attacked Pitt. "Should we not justly suspect a British Minister who has never favoured us, and who has so calamitously misdirected the affairs of the kingdom over which he officially presides?"

On February 17th the House went into committee on the Union; Corry, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, opening with an allusion to the inflammatory conduct of men of education and property, especially of Grattan. Grattan replied in the same strain of personal invective, and the two then proceeded outside and, in accordance with the custom of the time, fought a duel in which Corry was slightly wounded. Sir John Parnell then rose and went into details of the measure, being answered at length by Castlereagh. The resolution that there should be a legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland was then carried by 161 to 115. The Opposition now perceived they were hopelessly beaten, and the measure steadily but slowly passed its remaining stages. Everything was still tried to hinder its progress until the opinion of the country could be distinctly declared, and in March, Saurin, who had been returned by Lord Downshire for one of his boroughs, argued strongly against the moral legality of the Irish Parliament to dissolve itself without the consent of the people. Many petitions were still being presented by large classes of manufacturers, and Ponsonby stated on March 4th that twenty-six counties had also petitioned. Nevertheless, by March 28th the articles of Union had passed through both Houses, and were at once sent to England with the resolutions in favour of the measure.

1800. March.

In the English Parliament there was not much discussion, the chief opposition being made by Grey, who feared "that ultimately at least the Irish members will afford a certain accession of force to the party of every Administration,[2] and that therefore their weight would be thrown on the side of the Crown," a prophecy which

[1] April 14, 1800.

[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxv. p. 47.

has been singularly falsified on nearly every important occasion since. 1800. March.

Fox did not attend the debates but his opinion is well expressed in a letter to the Honourable R. Fitzpatrick dated April 3, 1800. "Nothing can persuade me to attend; but if there were any public in this country to be operated upon, I think it one of the strongest cases that can be laid before it. I think particularly the compensation to the borough holders will be one of the most bitter pills that ever was swallowed; and it must, I think, be about equally disagreeable to both Reformers and Anti-Reformers,"[1] . . . "to sell directly and avowedly the influence a man has upon others was reserved for these times." Later he wrote to Grey after his speech against the Union, explaining that he could not with fairness be supposed more indifferent to the question of Union than to all the other questions of politics that have been or are in agitation, and that the original ground of retiring "was not that the questions likely to be agitated were unimportant but that our attendance in Parliament upon them was useless."[2]

In the House of Commons Grey's resolution that the Union should be postponed until the opinion of the Irish people had been ascertained was rejected by 236 to 30, but on the clause admitting English wool into Ireland, the Opposition received some support from the commercial members and the minority rose to 58. In the House of Lords, Lord Downshire, who sat as the Earl of Hillsborough, spoke in opposition; but Lord Moira, who had at first opposed, now supported the measure.

The resolutions of the English Houses and their address to the King were at once sent to Ireland, and the Parliament there proceeded to the final stages of the measure. It was decided that the representative peers were to be chosen by the Irish peers, but that no new election was to take place to the Imperial House of Commons, the members for the boroughs which would be privileged to send representatives to that House being required simply to take their seats without re-election. By the end of May the resolutions 1800. May.

[1] Russell, "Fox's Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 295.
[2] Ibid., p. 312.

1800. May. were embodied into the form of a Bill which speedily passed both Houses, and was sent to England, where it experienced the same fate. The termination of the Union debates in the Irish House of Commons was marked by an interesting little scene which had evidently been arranged beforehand. When the House adjourned the Speaker walked out followed by forty-one members. Outside, the populace, who were awaiting them, uncovered, and in deep silence accompanied them to the Speaker's residence in Molesworth Street. On reaching it he turned round, bowed to the crowd, entered his house, and the assembly dispersed without uttering a word.[1]

After the Union had passed there seems to have been some misunderstanding between the British Ministers and the Irish Government as to the exact powers granted to Cornwallis to promise peerages. The King wished to postpone the creations until after the royal assent had been given, and the Government also thought it would be better "that five or six or even more of the representative peers should be persons who had resisted the Union rather than that the exclusion of any single one should be ascribed to the peers created for the Union."[2] Both Cornwallis and Castlereagh strongly urged that they must fulfil their promises, the former writing, "there was no sacrifice I would not make for the service of my King and country except that of my honour," and stating that if such a step was taken "the confidence in the English Government will be shaken." Castlereagh actually tendered his resignation if he could not keep his word.

1800. August. Two days after the debates concluded, Mr. Dawson, the member for Donaghan, Lord Maxwell, and some others, who opposed the Union, rose to state that as it had been carried they would consider it their duty to obey it, and endeavour to reconcile their constituents to its provisions; this action drew from Castlereagh a commendatory speech. The Compensation Bill followed, and was but little resisted, although two of the peers objected to the excessive amount to be paid by Ireland. The King gave his assent on August 1st, and on the 6th the Viceroy proceeded in state to the Irish

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 251.
[2] Ibid., p. 325.

House of Lords to give his sanction. A new seal of the Empire was given to the Irish Chancellor, a new standard adding St. Patrick to St. George and St. Andrew was designed, and a change was made in the royal title. 1800. August.

At this time it is difficult to pronounce a decided opinion upon the action of the English Government in forcing on a measure which had certainly not been demanded by Ireland, even if we allow that the opposition to it was not really so great as the active opponents to the measure endeavoured to represent. Petitions, meetings, speeches, and opinions of politicians only imperfectly represent national feelings at any time, and the steady tradesmen and commercial classes were influenced entirely in their political opinions by a medley of feelings of which patriotism and self-interest were more or less blended. The lower orders in the counties of Ireland, who were in such a state of ignorance that most could not read or write, were easily played upon by both sides, and it is very doubtful if they knew in the least the meaning of the proceedings in Dublin, and it is certain they could not calculate the advantages or disadvantages likely to accrue from the Union. It is therefore impossible to say for certain that the majority were opposed to Union. But allowing that the majority did not wish to lose the presence of their legislators from Dublin, was the English Government justified in forcing on the measure? When we consider the dangers of foreign invasion, and the disloyalty of a great portion of the inhabitants, I think we must admit the Ministers were justified, for although the Parliament was undoubtedly loyal at the time it might not always have been so, and the argument that it was an inopportune time because so much disaffection existed is as absurd as protesting against the presence of a fire-engine while the house is still burning. England required all the strength she could muster, and she required that it should be centralised in one Parliament, so that there should be no doubt that Ireland would help her against the common enemy with soldiers and sailors. If England were rendered more secure by the Union, Ireland benefited also to a far greater extent; her trade regulations were improved; the system of corruption which had been practised for a long time to ensure a majority was no longer

1800. August. necessary, and if the improvements in justice, education, and the political position of the Catholics were postponed, it was certainly the intention of the English Government at the time that they should be remedied as soon as possible.

1800. It is not the place here to comment upon the results attending the presence of Irish members at Westminster, or upon the extent to which the hopes of the Government in 1800 have not been realised, but if we form a fair estimate of the position of the Ministry at that date, I think it will be the opinion of most that their action seemed the best and most likely to lead to permanent security, prosperity, and happiness.

CHAPTER XII

Bonaparte's letter to George III., January 1800—Grenville's reply—Bonaparte and Austria—Plan for a royalist rising in France abandoned—Debate on negotiations with France—News from Hamilton at Palermo—Hamilton succeeded by Paget—Nelson in command of Mediterranean fleet—Government searching for allies—France preparing for the campaign—Massena blockaded in Genoa by Melas—Bonaparte crosses the Alps—Defeat of Austrians at Marengo—Austrians defeated by Moreau—Convention of El Arish—Malta surrenders to England—Russia demands Malta—The league of armed neutrality—Character of debates in Parliament.

ONE of the first acts of Bonaparte in his new office of First Consul was to make overtures of peace to England and Austria, but being either indifferent to, or anxious to modify, the usual methods of diplomacy, he addressed letters in his own name to the Emperor Francis and King George III. The letter to the King was enclosed in a note from Talleyrand to Grenville merely asking that it might be delivered. It begins by stating that war had ravaged the four quarters of the globe for eight years, and asks whether the two most powerful and enlightened nations in the world ought to sacrifice, for the desire of vain grandeur, the welfare of commerce, prosperity at home, and domestic felicity. It continues that his Majesty would see in this overture the sincere desire of Bonaparte to contribute for the second time to the general pacification by some prompt action which would restore mutual confidence.[1] 1800. January.

The reply was written by Grenville and sent to Talleyrand. It is dated January 4, 1800, and begins by snubbing

[1] The original in Bonaparte's own writing is in the Records, and the last sentence but one runs thus: "Par une démarche prompte, toute de confiance et dégagée de ces formes qui, nécessaires peut-être pour deguiser la dépendance des états faibles, ne décelent dans les états forts que le désir mutuel de se tromper."—F. O. Records, France, 56. This letter is published in the *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, tome vi. p. 36. The idea of Napoleon to take a step "disengaged from those forms, which necessary perhaps to disguise the dependence of weak States, prove only, in those which are strong, the mutual desire of deceiving each other," shows that he considered the usual methods of diplomacy could be improved upon.

1800. January. Bonaparte for departing from the usual mode of conducting diplomatic business in Europe, and then states that his Majesty has directed that the following answer should be given. Although his Majesty earnestly wishes for peace, he sees "no hope that this desirable object can result from any negotiation at the present moment, or until it shall distinctly appear that those causes have ceased to operate which have both produced and prolonged the present war." Grenville then proceeds in strong language to abuse the methods France has adopted in the war, and the manner in which she raises her resources "under the severest pressure of internal distress for the extension of this system, and for the consequent oppression and destruction of all surrounding nations. To this restless and determined spirit for the extermination of every established Government, the Netherlands, the United Provinces, the Swiss Cantons, his Majesty's ancient friends and allies have successively been sacrificed." . . . "While such a system continues to prevail experience has shown that no defence but that of open and steady hostility can be availing." . . . "The best and most natural pledge would be the restoration of that line of princes which for so many years maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and in consideration and respect abroad." After this severe lecture and advice Grenville proceeds to state, with curious inconsistency, that his Majesty "forms no claim to prescribe to France what shall be the form of her Government."[1]

Now there is no doubt that Bonaparte did not sincerely desire peace, but it is also as certain that if he had, this despatch would at once have precluded all hopes of it, and it is therefore of interest to consider for a moment who was responsible for the wording adopted. The writer, of course, was Grenville, who never made any attempt to conceal his contempt for a country which had chosen to raise a General of obscure birth to supreme power, or for a Government which had not observed the sacred etiquette of diplomatic usage. No doubt every statement in the despatch rests upon a strong foundation of truth, but it is not the business

[1] F. O. Records, France, 56. This letter was presented to Parliament on January 22, 1800. "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 1195.

of one country to lecture another, either on its form of Government or on the method by which it raises its supplies, but after doing this over several pages, Grenville, with curious inconsistency, states that his Majesty does not claim to suggest to France what should be her form of Government. 1800. January.

The question arises how far the other members of the Government were responsible for allowing the despatch to be sent. In the first place, the King thought it too strong, but agreed with the sentiments it expressed, and did not suggest any alteration. Now, although it was the custom to submit foreign despatches to the King, they were not necessarily discussed in the Cabinet. We are so accustomed to regard the Cabinet as absolutely responsible, and its actions as reflecting the unanimous opinion of its members, that it is necessary to remember that at this date it was not unusual for a Minister to protest, even in writing, against a minute of the Cabinet without necessarily resigning his post. That this despatch was not submitted to a full Cabinet meeting we know, because Pitt wrote to Dundas stating that some answer to Bonaparte's letter must be sent "before I can hear from you." In this letter Pitt mentions the fact that he agreed with Grenville that all negotiations should be declined at present, "on the ground that the actual situation of France does not as yet hold out any solid security to be derived from negotiation," and that the best method to attain peace would be "by effecting the restoration of Royalty."[1] It seems, therefore, that Pitt agreed with the main arguments, and he states that Lord Spencer and Windham also approved of them, but it is certain that some of the Cabinet never saw the despatch at all, and that Pitt did not hesitate to direct that an answer should be returned without even waiting to hear the opinion of such an important member of the Government as Mr. Dundas. Not only was the wording of the despatch most undiplomatic and in the worst taste possible, but it obviously lent itself to the sharpest of retorts. Talleyrand merely replied that France had as much right to expel an incapable dynasty as had

[1] Pitt to Dundas, December 31, 1799. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 206.

1800. January. Great Britain a century before.[1] The Government, indeed, was made to feel it had committed a gross error in judgment, and Bonaparte was enabled to represent that the Bourbons were seeking their restoration at the hands of the enemies of France, which alone would cause the Republic to continue the war to the very last.

Austria was more politic, and replied courteously. Bonaparte then proposed to treat for peace on the basis of the Treaty of Campo Formio, although Austria had reconquered Lombardy and driven the French armies nearly to Nice.[2] Such a preposterous suggestion showed conclusively that the First Consul had no real intention of making peace, and Austria therefore declined to negotiate further without the concurrence of her allies. This abortive negotiation, in fact, did not affect the course of events at all, for England intended that the war should not cease until the Netherlands were retaken from France, and the Monarchy restored. At the very moment, indeed, when Bonaparte's letter was received, Pitt was negotiating with Monsieur with the object of arranging a royalist rising in France, which should act in concert with the British fleet off Brest, and cut off all supplies between that place and Paris, while a blockade was maintained at sea. By this means it was hoped to produce a mutiny in Brest, and cause the garrison to capitulate, and the crews to give up their ships. The French ships were to be retained in trust for the King, but the Spanish ones were to be taken as prizes.[3] The very conception of this plan showed how ignorant Pitt and Grenville were of the true strength of the Republican feeling in France, and of the power of her armies. But Sir Charles Grey and Colonel Twiss, the military experts, were very unfavourable to the scheme, and it was ultimately dropped.

On January 20th, Grenville answered Talleyrand's despatch by a curt refusal to proceed with the negotiations, chiefly because the overtures of France were addressed only to

[1] See Bonaparte's instructions to Talleyrand. *Correspondance*, vol. vi. p. 92.

[2] Bonaparte's letter to the German Emperor is in the *Correspondance*, vol. vi. p. 37.

[3] Pitt to Dundas, December 22, 1799. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 206.

England and did not extend to her allies, but he stated that when the attainment of peace could be sufficiently provided for, his Majesty would eagerly concert with his allies the means of immediate and joint negotiation. On the next day the two Houses of Parliament met, and the correspondence with France was laid on the tables with a message from the King. The wording of the first letter printed in the "Parliamentary History" is slightly different to the copy of the despatch in the "Records," but the gist of the matter is the same. 1800. January.

A week later an Address was moved in reply to the King's message in the House of Lords by Grenville, who stated that "Peace with a nation whose war was made against all order, all religion, all morality, would be rather a cessation of resistance to wrong, than a suspension of arms in the nature of ordinary warfare. Hence it was incumbent to persevere with increased vigour in the contest."[1] He then argued that a nation who "solemnly proclaimed her love of peace" was at war in the course of eight years with every nation in Europe except two, Sweden and Denmark, and proceeded to give a history of the war in order to prove that Bonaparte had no real desire for peace, and that it would be "dishonest to commence any negotiation that was not in every consistent respect likely to terminate in peace." The Duke of Bedford complained strongly of the language used in the Minister's answer, and accused him of insulting the French nation "at the very outset of an attempt at negotiation." He then sketched the evil state of our finances, and talked of the oppression of the people, "who were bending under the accumulated weight of taxes," and moved that the Lords regretted that his Majesty had been advised to reject the first overtures for peace, and that he should give orders for the renewal of the negotiations.[2] On a division the House rejected the Amendment by 92 to 6 votes.[3] 1800. February.

In the House of Commons a week later Mr. Dundas moved an address approving of the correspondence laid on the table, and stated as an undeniable fact "that the leading

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. p. 1205.
[2] Ibid., p. 1222. [3] Ibid., p. 1241.

1800. February. feature of the French Revolution, illustrated by the uniform tenor of its conduct to foreign states, is a total disregard for all treaties and obligations, and a sovereign contempt for the rights and privileges of other powers."

He continued, "Bonaparte, who blasphemed his God, was not the sort of man to whom I can look for sincerity in his proposition for a negotiation for peace, or fidelity in the event of successful issue." He then made the astounding statement that the country had twice entered into negotiations with France, and that "there was no part of administration that was not deeply impressed with a sense of danger at the time, in the event of such negotiations proving successful." He argued that if the Monarchy were restored we knew the worst of that form of Government, and he would be extremely sorry that any system should prove stable which was "founded on the principles of the present French Government."[1] From this speech it was made quite obvious that Dundas preferred to be at war rather than at peace with France, because he could not approve of their principles of Government, and if it be really true that the Administration feared lest the previous negotiations should have proved successful, the only wonder is that those of 1797 should have been pursued so eagerly by Pitt and Malmesbury.

1800. January. Whitbread followed in opposition, and Canning answered him in a long speech of remarkable eloquence and power. But the Prime Minister summed up his own policy and his own character when he stated, "As a sincere lover of peace I will not sacrifice it by grasping at the shadow, when the reality is not in truth within my reach." He was followed by Fox, who accused the Government of being afraid that Bonaparte would have agreed if they had suggested that the negotiation should have included all their allies. "I think you ought to have given a civil, clear, and explicit answer to the overture, which was fairly and honourably made." On the division the Address was carried by 265 to 64 votes. At this time the country was undoubtedly in favour of continuing the war, and, although the people were not so passionately desirous of restoring the Monarchy

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. pp. 1242–1235.

in France as were the Government, there was a general feeling that it would be useless to conclude a peace with a nation which changed its Constitution by a violent revolution every two or three years. 1800. January.

In January the Government learnt from Hamilton, who was now at Palermo, where the Neapolitan Court had taken up its abode, that the King had received a letter from the Russian Emperor which left no room for doubt that he intended breaking off his alliance with the Court of Vienna, and that the Neapolitan Court would also be abandoned, although Russia was bound by a solemn treaty to support it. The Secretary of the Russian Embassy also informed Hamilton that the fleet was ordered into the Black Sea.[1] The British Minister, after the anxious and arduous year, now returned home, and was succeeded at the Neapolitan Court by the Honourable Arthur Paget, who was instructed to urge the King to raise more forces, if he had not sufficient already, and to restore order in Naples. He was also instructed that the King of England maintained with the Court of Naples a connection which might prove to the very great future advantage of the commerce and influence of England in the Mediterranean, but that "he wishes on the other hand to avoid giving unnecessary uneasiness to the Austrian Government which may probably be found in the next campaign, to afford to his Majesty the most effectual co-operation against the common enemy."[2]

On January 6th Nelson was appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and on the 20th joined Lord Keith at Leghorn, who had received intelligence of an enemy's squadron intended probably for an attempt to break the blockade of Malta. This scheme was frustrated by spreading the fleet all round the island, and Nelson was also successful in capturing the French ship *Genéreux*. But the prolonged strain had told even on his iron constitution, and his health was now so bad that he was obliged to leave Malta and return to England in February.

The Ministers were now again using their utmost en-

[1] From Hamilton, Palermo, January 16, 1800. F. O. Records, Sicily, 13.
[2] To the Hon. Arthur Paget. F. O. Records, Sicily, 14.

1800. February. deavours to whip up allies against the French by persuasion, argument, and offers of pecuniary assistance, and on February 13th a message from the King informed both Houses that he was concerting arrangements with the Emperor, the Elector of Bavaria, and other German princes to strengthen the common cause, for which purpose he asked for further subsidies. Pitt then stated that half a million would be required at once, and two millions more on the completion of the treaties. Mr. Tierney, who in the absence of Fox took his place as leader of the small Opposition, rose to resist the subsidies, and violently attacked the whole policy of the Government. "I would demand of the Minister," he added, "to state in one sentence what is the object of the war." Pitt thus challenged replied at once, "The hon. gentleman defies me to state in a single sentence the object of this war. Sir, I will do so in a single word. The object, I tell him, is Security!" He then proceeded to state that Bonaparte was "the child and the champion of all the atrocities" of Jacobinism, and although he considered the restoration of the French Monarchy a most desirable object, because it would afford the best security to this country and to Europe, if the object be not attainable, it would be necessary to be satisfied with the best security which could be attained without it.

The attitude of Pitt and the Government at this time is indeed perfectly intelligible. They preferred the restoration of a Monarchy, because they knew its methods and were accustomed to deal with them, whereas the Republic was a new power always changing its shape at a moment's notice; they opposed the principle that the army of any nation should march into a neighbour's territory and enforce the population to adopt new methods even if many of the people were willing to receive them with open arms; they underrated the strength and wealth of the Republic, and still hoped that if the Monarchies could be induced to join in a league, it would be easy to crush the French, and although accustomed to autocratic rule in hereditary monarchs, they knew not the force of a colossal genius who, risen by his own exertions, scrupled at no means to attain his own ends.

1800. February.

It is easy now to criticise the Government for want of foresight, but could any human understanding have realised in 1800 that it would require another fifteen years of strenuous exertion and immense sacrifices before the object on which they had determined would be realised. The fundamental idea of the English race has always been that old methods are better than new ones, that old institutions ought to be improved if possible but never abolished, and in this lies the strength and continuity of our system. Knowing this, how could the Government expect that a General, who might be a brilliant officer on the field, but who knew nothing of Courts and politics, would be able to grasp the reins of Government in his own hands and direct successfully the mighty forces of a mighty nation.

Nor can we credit the Opposition with more prescience, or attribute to them praise for wishing to stop the war. All people approach national questions with a prejudice, usually in favour of their own country, and this is as natural as the fondness and pride of a parent for his own child, but a few are unconsciously and therefore involuntarily prejudiced against their own country and in favour of others. It is entirely a matter of disposition, which is but rarely affected by reasoning from facts. Fox, Sheridan, Grey, and the Duke of Bedford were first actuated by their sense of duty in Opposition, and secondly by this unconscious prejudice against their own country and in favour of the French, and no account of the justice in the one case, or the violent excesses in the other, altered this ingrained idea. Both sides were convinced their own was the just conception of the case, and both must have known that no statement of facts or arguments would change the opinion of the other. From that day to this, and from time immemorial to the end of society in nations, this positive and negative national force has been, is, and probably will be always in existence; and while it is satisfactory to individuals that each thinks his own conception the just one, it is fortunate for nations that overwhelming majorities will always be found to support their country in right and wrong, peace and war, and in just and unjust causes. At the end of the debate the Government was supported by 162 votes against 19, but the minority

1800. February. received some support from the city of London, where a meeting was held attended by 2000 persons, who signed a petition praying for an immediate negotiation with France.

1800. April. Meanwhile France was preparing for the campaign which was to drive the Austrians from Italy, but in April the Austrian General Melas attacked the French position on the Apennines, and after a fortnight of hard mountain warfare Massena was shut up in Genoa, blockaded by land and sea. On the Rhine, Moreau's force of 100,000 men was ready to cross into Germany and push back the Austrians from the Upper Danube, while Bonaparte's Italian army lay between Dijon and Geneva. In April, Moreau crossed the Rhine, defeated the Austrians, and took possession of the country south of the Danube as far as Ulm, thus preventing the Austrian forces from cutting Bonaparte's communications. On May the 8th the First Consul joined his army, and at once led it, by the pass of the Great St. Bernard, across the Alps. This extraordinary military feat was accomplished in an almost incredibly short time, and before Melas—who had left General Ott to invest Genoa, and had followed a French force to Nice—could return with his whole army to Turin to dispute Bonaparte's passage. When he discovered the move of the First Consul he at once sent to Ott ordering him to raise the siege and hasten to his help, but at this moment Massena was on the verge of starvation, and Ott being unwilling to lose his prey waited until he was forced to surrender on June 5th.

1800. May.

1800. June. This delay enabled Bonaparte to reach Milan unopposed, and to cut the communications of Melas with the country north of the Po, leaving him no choice but to fight or escape to Genoa. The Austrian General, who now at length was joined by Ott at Alexandria, decided to wait there for the French and give battle; but Bonaparte, being still fearful lest he would escape, sent Desaix southward to hold the road to Genoa, and himself advanced to Alexandria. The next day, June 14th, the army of Melas issued from the city, and after several hours' fighting defeated the French. They then prepared to return, satisfied and elated, but at this moment Desaix, who had heard the sound of the cannon

and retraced his steps, appeared on the battlefield and threw himself upon the exhausted Austrians, who broke and fled, a helpless mass of fugitives.[1] Melas, entirely overcome by this sudden and unexpected ending, agreed to an armistice, and, retiring behind the Mincio, abandoned to the French every fortress in Northern Italy west of that river. 1800. June.

At Vienna the conditions of the armistice were not approved, for Austria was prevented by her treaty with England from making any separate peace with France before the end of February 1801, and in return was promised the usual subsidies and a part of Piedmont. This was arranged by Thugut, who was firm in his desire to annex Piedmont, and was a willing ally so long as England found the funds to finance the Austrian armies. The Emperor, however, without the knowledge of his Minister, concluded an armistice with the French, and surrendered the fortresses of Ulm and Ingolstadt to Moreau's army. Thugut resigned, but the British Ambassador persuaded the weak and vacillating Emperor to recall him, and in this manner the only capable Minister in Austria resumed his post. Then the Austrian army, at the termination of the armistice, advanced against the enemy, without being aware of their exact position, into the forest of Hohenlinden, where it was attacked and completely annihilated by Moreau on December 3rd. The Emperor now recognising that nothing could keep Moreau out of Vienna, agreed to treat for peace without reference to Great Britain, and Thugut was finally removed from power. 1800. December.

While the Continental armies, subsidised by the general European banker, the British taxpayer, were being defeated by Bonaparte and Moreau, the British fleet remained mistress of the Mediterranean, and protected Naples from the ravages

[1] "Aux cris de Vive la République! Vive le Premier Consul! Desaix aborda au pas de charge et par le centre. Dans un instant l'ennemi est culbuté. Le général, Kellermann, qui, avec sa brigade de grosse cavalerie, avait toute la journée protégé la retraite de notre gauche, exécuta une charge avec tant de viguer et si à propos, que 6000 grenadiers et le général, Zach, chef de l'état-major général furent faits prisonniers, et plusieurs généraux ennemis tués."—Bulletin de l'armée de réserve, *Correspondance de Napoléon I^er^*, tome vi. p. 361.

1800. December. of the Republic. The King, nevertheless, still remained at Palermo, and no attempt was made to reorganise his Government on a sounder basis.[1] Deprived of the support and advice of both Hamilton and Nelson, and surrounded by a contemptible set of foolish Court favourites, he was swayed to and fro, but was gradually being drawn to the side of Russia, and was growing jealous of the British power over Malta.[2]

1800. June. In Egypt the French army still remained, but before the instructions from the Government reached Sir Sidney Smith, requiring him to allow no negotiation with the Porte for the return of the French troops, he had already acted on his own responsibility and urged General Kleber and the Grand Vizier to come to some terms. Smith undoubtedly assumed more power than he possessed, and, in spite of the fact that he had already once been taught a lesson in discipline by Nelson,[3] now actually allowed the Porte and the French to conclude a convention at El Arish, by which the French troops were to be conveyed home in vessels provided by the Porte, with bag and baggage, and under no restrictions as to future service.

Immediately after this a letter from Lord Keith arrived to the French General stating that the English Government would consent to no treaty, and that the French must become prisoners of war. Kleber refused, and at once prepared to fight the Grand Vizier, who was advancing to Cairo. The action took place at Heliopolis, and the Turks were utterly routed. This victory altered the views of the French at Cairo, who were now hopeful that they would not have to give up Egypt, and they therefore refused to renew the Convention.

Meanwhile the Austrians having been defeated on the Continent, as related above, Lord Minto, Ambassador at

[1] From Paget, Naples, March 25, 1800: "There does not exist a shadow of anything like order or regularity in any individual department in the State. All wish for the return of the King; the French themselves are detested but their principles have made many proselytes."—F. O. Records, Sicily, 14.

[2] From Paget, Palermo, June 27, 1800: "There is a confidential leaning on the part of this Court towards that of Russia. For some reason or other the royal family don't wish to return to Naples."—F. O. Records, Sicily, 14.

[3] See p. 177.

Vienna, was instructed to state on August the 9th that his Britannic Majesty was ready to join in any negotiation for a general peace. In answer to this M. Otto, a French gentleman who was employed by the First Consul in London as an agent for the exchange of prisoners, was requested to ask Lord Grenville for some further explanation of Lord Minto's overture. Through him the French Government then stated that they would not renew their armistice with Austria, which was now approaching its term, unless England joined in too, with a general truce by land and sea; their object being to relieve both the garrison of Malta and their army in Egypt. 1800. August.

The King wished to refuse altogether; Pitt was inclined to attempt some compromise which would neither enforce upon Austria a separate peace, or give up all the advantages which England had won in the Mediterranean; and Grenville suggested that the towns of Egypt and Malta should be placed on the same footing as those towns of Austria within the French sphere, but occupied by Austrian troops, while at the same time a fortnight's supply of provisions should be admitted, but no arms. The rest of the Cabinet were divided in opinion, Dundas being inclined to stand entirely alone without reference to other powers, "with a just sense of our dignity and honour, and of the conquests we have made out of Europe."[1]

Some of the Ministers thought that the only hope lay in the restoration of the Bourbons, and that there should be no peace with a Revolutionary Government. But the question was finally settled by the French, who insisted "that the maritime truce should offer to the French Republic advantages equal to those secured to the House of Austria by the Continental truce," and on this demand the negotiation was at once broken off. The anxiety of Pitt and Grenville to stand honourably by their allies, to relinquish no advantage won by England, and at the same time to prove that the continuance of the war was not their fault, is almost pathetic to relate. Opinions like the following are frequently found in the correspondence and speeches during the whole war: "If the modifications are rejected by France, we shall

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 242.

1800. August. at least have shown that we have done all that in fairness was possible towards a general peace, shall stand completely justified to Austria, and shall carry the opinion and spirit of our own country with us in any measures which the continuance of the war on this ground (if such should be the result) may require."[1]

1800. September. During these negotiations the long blockade of Malta was brought to a close by the surrender of Valetta on September 5th. When Nelson returned home in February the command of the blockading squadron was left to Captain Troubridge of the *Culloden*. On the 30th, during a dark night, the *Guillaume Tell*, the only remaining battleship of the fleet of Admiral Brueys which had fought at the battle of the Nile, put to sea from Valetta. She was, however, discovered by the *Penelope*, who started in chase, and soon overtaking her treated her to rousing broadsides as she manœuvred. Early in the morning the *Lion* also overtook the *Guillaume Tell* and gave her a broadside with three round shot in each gun; a little later the *Foudroyant* joined in the attack, and after battering each other until all the ships were practically disabled the French hauled down their colours.[2] The loss of this ship greatly depressed the French garrison, but still they held on until in August all the beasts of burden had been eaten, and the dogs, cats, fowls and rabbits had either been consumed or had died from want of food. The water was giving out and the troops were dying at the rate of 100 to 130 a day.

Convinced that he must soon yield, General Vaubois still wished to save to the Republic the two 40-gun frigates *Diane* and *Justice*. Favoured by a dark night and a fair wind these two ships therefore put to sea on August 24th. They were, however, seen and pursued by the frigate *Success*, and the *Genéreux* and *Northumberland* battleships. After a short fight with the *Success* the *Diane* hauled down her colours, but the *Justice*, under cover of the darkness, escaped. On September 3rd, General Vaubois held a council of war, with the result that a flag of truce was sent to Major-General

[1] From Pitt, a private letter, September 5, 1800. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 241.

[2] James' "Naval History," vol. iii. p. 18.

Pigot, who commanded the troops ashore, and on the 5th the terms of capitulation were agreed upon. Captain Ball was a short time afterwards appointed to administer the island, which has ever since been in the possession of Great Britain. 1800. September.

Gratitude may occasionally be met with in private life, but it is a negligible quantity in international politics. No sooner had the English, at great cost in treasure and at the expense of some loss of life, driven the invaders from Malta, than King Ferdinand, who owed his throne and perhaps even his life to the English Admiral, began to protest against the English flag being hoisted on the fortresses they had conquered.[1] At this time it was extremely doubtful who ought to have had the administration of the island according to the theories of international law, but there was no doubt that England was the only Power capable of protecting it from the French. The King of Naples was legally the Suzerain, and was an ally of England, but it is certain he could never have turned out the invaders unaided; the Emperor of Russia had been appointed by the Order of St John their Master, but the Order had surrendered the island to the French, who had occupied it until ejected by the forces of the English. The Czar of Russia had withdrawn his ships and had not contributed to the reduction of the island, so that he had actually no right to any voice in the matter at all. He had also declared himself to the Court of Berlin as neutral between France and England, so that under these circumstances it was out of the question to allow him to occupy Malta. Grenville therefore wrote to Paget on October 17th, instructing him to inform King Ferdinand that the military occupation would not prejudge the future disposition of the island, and expressing his opinion as to the necessity of excluding the Czar.[2] But that monarch, 1800. October.

[1] From Paget to Grenville, September 12th: "The King of Naples objects, because the British colours are flying in Valetta and other fortresses of Malta, to the exclusion of those of his Sicilian Majesty, and those of the Order of St. John."—F. O. Records, Sicily, 14.

[2] Grenville to Paget, October 17, 1800: "He (the Czar) has taken such steps as must leave it doubtful whether his occupation of the whole or any part of the island of Malta might not, under the influence of his present disposition, be converted to purposes essentially injurious to this country."—F. O. Records, Sicily, 14.

1800. October. with a cool presumption which was almost humorous, made a formal demand that the island should be surrendered to him as the head of the Knights of Malta. This was of course refused, which made him so furious that he laid an embargo on all the British ships in the ports of Russia, and seized above three hundred. Further, he invited all the neutral nations to join him in a confederacy against England under the name of an Armed Neutrality, in order to renew the plan against the Maritime Laws, insisted upon by Great Britain, which had originally been formed by the Empress Catherine in 1780. On December 16th there was therefore signed at St. Petersburg a Convention between Russia and Sweden to which Denmark soon adhered, the three Powers agreeing to maintain what they termed Maritime Rights by force of arms if necessary. Grenville at once expressed his displeasure to the Danish and Swedish Envoys, and pointed out that the Emperor of Russia had entered into articles which were directly opposed to the Convention of 1780, and that those engagements being still in force, his Majesty was entitled to demand the reciprocal execution of them during the present war.

1800. December. England was now in the proud position of being completely isolated and practically at war with the whole of Europe. France, Holland, and Spain were actively hostile to her; Russia, Sweden, and Denmark had joined in an armed neutrality against her; Naples was jealous of her occupation of Malta; Prussia was neutral, and Austria was *hors de combat.*

In spite of this formidable array of foes the high-handed courage of the Government never deserted them, for they knew that the fleets of England were at least equal to all which could be brought against them. The retaliation was therefore swift and sure, for an embargo was laid upon all Russian, Swedish, and Danish vessels in the ports of the United Kingdom by an order in Council dated January 14, 1801.

Not only, however, was England assailed by enemies in every direction abroad, but the Opposition considered it their duty to attack the Government on every conceivable occasion at home.

On November 27th Mr. Tierney moved that the House do resolve itself into a committee to inquire into the state of the nation. He pointed out that if the object of France was to seize upon the Continent that of England was to seize the Colonies of foreign states; that the war in eight years had cost upwards of £200,000,000, at the rate of £25,000,000 a year, and that this compared very unfavourably with the expense of the Seven Years' War; that we had lost all our allies on the Continent, and that the finances of the country were in a very bad condition. Mr. Pitt answered that the question of peace and war had not altered since they last met, except that since "that period his Majesty has given the strongest and most unequivocal proofs of his sincere desire for peace; he has shown his willingness to make great sacrifices for the attainment of so desirable an object; and his efforts have been frustrated by the unreasonable and unexampled demands of the enemy, which have prevented the setting on foot such a negotiation."[1] He then pointed out the triumphs of our navy, and that we had destroyed the navy and commerce of our rival, and finally gave it as his opinion that the present war did not yield in the importance of its success to the most brilliant period of our history. Mr. Pitt was followed by Mr. Grey, who was in favour of an inquiry into the management of the war. Mr. Canning in an able speech then supported the Government, and on a division Mr. Tierney's motion was rejected by 157 to 37. 1800. December.

On December 1st Mr. Sheridan rose to move that his Majesty should enter into a separate negotiation with the Government of France for a speedy and honourable peace, and proceeded to criticise the late negotiations. He stated that "there appears the strongest ground to suspect that in all the negotiations for peace which Ministers have carried on, although they may not have thwarted their plenipotentiaries; although there may have been conditions to which they would have acceded; still that they have never sincerely wished for success, and never sincerely lamented the want of it."[2]

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxv. p. 618.
[2] Ibid., p. 651.

1800. December. Mr. Windham (Secretary at War) cleverly answered this charge in the following words, "A negotiation between states is like a bargain between individuals. The negotiation is the beginning of a treaty, the bargaining is the beginning of a bargain. Why then, I say, that, according to the common sense and common parlance of mankind, you never introduced the idea of sincerity into a bargain." [1]

After Mr. Grey had spoken Mr. Dundas roundly stated, "In all questions of peace and war the decision belongs to the King, and that it is not the province of this House to interpose, unless upon very important occasions." This motion was lost by 156 to 35. A third motion was brought on December 4th by Mr. Jones, imploring his Majesty to dismiss his Ministers. None of the Ministers nor any of the leading speakers of the Opposition joined in this debate, and the motion was lost by 66 to 13 votes. At the close of the eighteenth century the debates in the House of Commons were conducted in quite a different manner than they are now. The speakers were not so numerous but the speeches were much longer; the most minute details were entered into with care, whereas now the House is assumed to be conversant with all the facts which have been related at length in the newspapers; although there was hard hitting, it was outspoken not insinuated, and the Speaker very rarely had to call a member to order; the practice of questioning Ministers was practically unknown; the speeches showed a great power of metaphysical reasoning and logic, and oratorical fencing was developed to a great degree. At this date no such thing as opposition by the mere obstruction of continuous talking was known, and it was not necessary to invent the closure for nearly a century afterwards. Members were rarely suspended, and personal resistance was unknown. Altogether the debates had more the style of academic discussions among gentlemen, and there were neither old Parliamentary hands endeavouring to conciliate the dictates of political associations and the obvious wishes of the country with their consciences, or young members striving to attract

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxv. p. 674.

attention by speaking on every available opportunity, and by constantly bringing forward foolish amendments. 1800. December.

The House of Commons at this date had a position of power and dignity which has never been equalled since. The social and intellectual status of the members, compared with the remainder of the people in the country, was far higher than it has been since. Political associations were unknown, the Press was in its infancy, and Ministers had not so entirely absorbed all the available time for discussion, so that no great forces existed to detract from the influence of the lower House either within or without Parliament.

CHAPTER XIII

Pitt on reform in 1800—Rise in the price of food—Its true cause due to expansion of the currency?—The Brown Bread Bill—Forestallers and regraters—Character of George III.—Attempt to assassinate him—Cabinet in 1799 prepared to emancipate Catholics—King strongly opposed—Lord Loughborough's underhand action—Debate in 1689 on the Coronation Oath—Loughborough's Cabal—King sends for Addington—Pitt resigns—Embarrassing position of Cornwallis and Castlereagh—Pitt brings in the Budget—Return of the King's malady—Proposals for a Regency—King recovers—Pitt promises never to agitate the Catholic question during his life-time—Irish promises all broken.

1800. April. In the last year of the eighteenth century the attitude of the Tory party towards a reform of the representation was enunciated by Mr. Pitt during a debate on the question of Union. He began by stating frankly that he had not forgotten what he had said and felt on the subject, but continued, "All opinions must inevitably be subservient to times and circumstances; and that a man who talks of his consistency merely because he holds the same opinion for ten or fifteen years, when the circumstances under which it was formed are totally changed, is a slave to the most idle vanity." He then pointed out that the modern schemes of reform were as different from those he intended as they were from the Constitution; that where the greatest changes had taken place the most terrible consequences had followed; that England alone had remained untouched in its vital principles, and supported itself against the attacks of its enemies abroad, and its professed friends in favour of reform at home, and that it had kept the confidence of the people. "I think it right to declare my most decided opinion that, even if the times were proper for experiments, any, even the slightest change in such a Constitution must be considered an evil."[1] These were curious words to use during the debate on the Act of Union, but it must be remembered that that measure

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxv. p. 320.

John Hoppner. R.A. pinx.

Walker & Cockerell ph. sc.

Right Hon. William Pitt, M.P.

was intended as a safeguard against jacobinical principles, whereas a reform of the representation at that time would, Pitt thought, cause them to gain ground in the House of Commons. But it is obvious from the words, "even if the times were proper for experiments," &c., that Pitt was now firmly opposed to any scheme of reform under any circumstances, which conclusively proves that the fear of revolution had taken a firm hold upon him, and still actuated his conduct. 1800. April.

The price of wheat had been steadily rising during the year, so that whereas the average annual price per quarter was 69s. in 1799, it was 113s. 10d. in 1800. This was a fair index of the price of other edible commodities, and could not fail to give rise to much anxious thought among the Ministers. Pitt was in favour of an early meeting of Parliament, for "even if no important legislative measures could be taken, the result of Parliamentary inquiry and discussion would go further than anything towards quieting men's minds, and checking erroneous opinions."[1] He further proposed to renew the measure, guaranteeing a given price to all corn and rice imported, and to attempt to devise some means for encouraging further the growth of corn. 1800. October.

The general idea among politicians seems to have been that the increase in prices was due to the scarcity occasioned by the war, but there is no doubt that the price also rose of many commodities which could not be affected by the scarcity factor. Rise in price may be caused either by a deficiency in the quantity of the commodity, or by an increase in the quantity of money. Now, although there had been bad harvests, it is certain that the country could easily at this date have produced enough wheat to supply its population if it had paid to grow it, but the expense of every article used in farming had increased so much that the bad crops caused a loss even at the enhanced price of corn in the market.[2] We must therefore conclude

[1] Pitt to Addington, October 9, 1800. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 245.

[2] See a very interesting letter from Grenville to Pitt, October 24, 1800. Ibid., p. 247.

1800. October. that the general rise was not so much due to scarcity as to the stoppage of payment in gold in 1797 by the Bank, and the consequent increase in the money circulating by means of inconvertible bank-notes. It is true a certain amount of gold had been shipped in foreign subsidies, but this would have but a very slight effect in reducing the total amount of the circulation. Pitt was not an absolute free-trader, wherein he differed from his colleague Grenville, who was in favour of allowing prices to settle themselves, but was compelled to yield to his chief in the Cabinet.

The country looked to the Government to cheapen their food, and would certainly not have been content to be told that the high prices were due to the fact that there was more paper-money than usual in the country, even if the Ministers had themselves come to this conclusion. There is no evidence, however, that this was the prevalent idea among those in authority at this date.

1800. March. Although it is not easy to discover the total amount of money in circulation with any accuracy, we know the value of the Bank of England notes issued, and that, whereas in the three months ending September 25, 1797, the value of notes of £5 and upwards in circulation was £9,762,130, for a corresponding period ending March 25, 1800, the value had risen to £13,433,420. The amount of small notes, £1 and £2, had also increased, and far more rapidly, from a value of £990,850 for the three months ending June 25, 1797, to £2,062,300 for the period ending December 25, 1800.[1] Besides this increase in the amount of paper-money the Mint had also not been idle, and during the five years ending in 1800, the value of the gold coined was £5,770,303, 17s. 6d.

As the increased prices were largely due to the plethora of money, we should expect that all commodities would show a rise, and this is proved by the following table compiled by an inhabitant of Bury St. Edmunds to

[1] The restriction in cash payments of the Bank during the war enabled them to raise the amount of their notes in circulation from twelve to twenty-eight millions. M'Cullock, "Ricardo's Works," p. 394.

show the relative expense of housekeeping at different dates.[1] 1800. March.

	1773.			1793.			1800.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Comb of malt	0	12	0	1	3	0	2	0	0
Chaldron of coals	1	11	6	2	6	0	2	11	0
Comb of oats	0	5	0	0	16	0	1	1	0
Load of hay	2	2	0	5	5	0	7	0	0
Meat	0	0	4	0	0	7	0	0	9
Butter	0	0	6	0	0	11	0	1	4
Sugar (loaf)	0	0	8	0	1	3	0	1	4
Soap	0	0	6	0	0	9½	0	0	10
Candles	0	0	6	0	0	9½	0	0	10½

A glance at this table shows us that the price of many commodities had risen greatly between 1773 and 1793, before the restriction of cash payments by the Bank, proving clearly that the plethora of paper-money was not the only cause of enhanced prices; but however much we attribute the rise of prices to scarcity, and the scarcity to the war, it is certain that this factor could not have caused a purely home product such as coal to rise from £1, 11s. 6d. in 1773 to £2, 11s. in 1800, and the same reasoning applies also to hay, malt, meat, and butter. If, indeed, we take the price of forty typical commodities in 1783 and regard it as 100, then the price of the same commodities in 1793 would be 98; in 1796, 128; in 1797, 110; in 1800, 142; and in 1809, 151; after which date it fell more or less regularly until in 1866 it reached 92.[2]

It is of interest to students of political economy to discover the causes regulating prices, but the demand of the housekeeper was to obtain his food and other necessities at a less cost, and Pitt was therefore compelled to attempt some measures which would have the effect of cheapening the living of the people. To do this, the faulty principle was adopted of enforcing by law that the supply should be so great that the scarcity factor in regulating price could not act normally. The idea, in other words, was to create 1800. November.

[1] *Annual Register*, 1800, part ii. pp. 147–148.

[2] Jevons, "Journal of the Statistical Society," vol. xxviii. p. 314. Quoted from Traill's "Social England," vol. v. p. 612.

1800. November. a great glut of provisions in the market, especially of wheat, and in order to ensure this a bounty was ordered on certain articles of import, no corn was allowed to be made into starch or distilled into spirits, and no bread was to be made solely from the fine flour of wheat. These laws were at once passed when the Houses met on November 11th, but the Brown Bread Bill, as it was called, was found so objectionable in practice that it was repealed at the beginning of the ensuing session. Ultimate principles of prices did not interest the public, but nevertheless they had their own ideas, and at this date strongly opposed all speculating in corn, and the practice of monopolies, which they considered raised the cost of necessities. In fact, so loud had been the cry against "Forestallers and regraters,"[1] that in July a trial was instituted in the King's Bench against a large cornfactor named Mr. Rusby, who had purchased ninety quarters of oats at 41s. per quarter, and sold thirty of them at 44s. on the same day. The jury brought in a verdict of Guilty, upon which the Chief Justice Lord Kenyon addressed them in the following words: "You have conferred by your verdict almost the greatest benefit that ever was conferred by any jury."[2] This extraordinary opinion, which, carried to its logical conclusion, would have rendered it illegal for any tradesman to buy any article with the object of selling it at a profit, was fortunately not supported by the full Court, and the benefit of the doubt was allowed to Mr. Rusby. The same erroneous idea was also brought forward in the House of Commons by Mr. Wilberforce Bird, Member for Coventry, who, in the debates on the questions relating to the price of food, stated that his constituents would desire far more effectual measures of relief, and that they would feel that the great evils to which alone it could be attributed, monopoly and extortion, were not to be checked by Parliament. Pitt replied that "there has been a disposition to inculcate the mischievous idea that it was in

1800. July.

[1] A forestaller is one who buys provisions before they arrive at the market with the hope of selling them at a higher price. A regrater is one who simply buys and sells in the same market.

[2] *Annual Register*, 1800, part ii. p. 23.

the power of Parliament to make every deficiency disappear —a deficiency arising principally from a succession of unfavourable seasons, whatever other causes may have contributed to it—and at once to produce abundance and cheapness." The whole idea of enhanced prices, indeed, at this time, was attributed to an insufficient supply and not to the increased amount of money in circulation, but while it is impossible to believe that at 113s. 10d. per quarter, the quantity of wheat in 1800 was less than half the amount in 1798 when the price was 51s. 10d., it is easier to understand that the difference was chiefly due to the increased amount of money in circulation. The idea that the price of food and other commodities was chiefly caused by the increase in money in the shape of inconvertible notes is strongly supported by the fact that after 1818, when the Bank resumed payment in gold, the price of wheat fell steadily, with an occasional rise in certain years, until it reached in 1835 the lowest price known to that date, 39s. 4d. per quarter. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 did not affect the price to any great extent, for it varied between 50s. 10d. in 1845 to 69s. 9d. in 1847, but fell to 38s. 6d. in 1851; and then, after 1852, when an influx of gold from Australia and California raised the price of all commodities, the price of wheat also rose with them. 1800. July. 1800.

The laws attempting to regulate the natural action of economical principles were not the only ones passed in this session, although they were the most important. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was continued, and discussions took place on the late negotiations for peace with France.

Before we enter upon the events which led to the resignation of Pitt and the postponement of Catholic Emancipation, it is necessary to consider for a moment the character of George III. With but little power of political judgment and with no more foresight than his Ministers, he was undoubtedly actuated by a keen sense of his honour as a righteous man and his position as a monarch. He was, however, extremely obstinate and self-willed, and if he had once come to a decision it was only after prolonged and patient reasoning and argument that he could be persuaded to alter it. As a

1800. man and a father he lived a virtuous domestic life, greatly at variance with the standard adopted by his own sons and the aristocracy, for which he earned the respect and love of his people, who took the keenest interest in the personal doings of their monarch, but were not in a position to know his political opinions.

1800. May. On the 15th May 1800 two events had happened which showed the extraordinary coolness and courage of the King in moments of danger. In the morning he was reviewing the Grenadier Guards in Hyde Park, and during some firing a gentleman named Ongley, who was standing about twenty yards away, suddenly received a bullet in his thigh. It was at first thought to be the act of an assassin, but inquiries afterwards led to the belief that the ball had slipped into the musket by accident. The King showed neither suspicion nor alarm, and quietly ordered the surgeon of the Grenadiers to treat the wound. When it was suggested that the princesses should be sent away, he remarked, "I will not have one of them stir for the world," and the whole party remained while another five volleys were fired.[1]

In the evening the King attended Drury Lane Theatre, which was crammed with a loyal audience anxious to show by their applause their joy at his escape in the morning. He was bowing his acknowledgments from the front of the royal box when a man in the pit deliberately discharged a horse pistol at him. Two slugs passed over the head of the King, who then coolly surveyed the audience through his opera-glass and ordered the play to commence. The would-be assassin was a soldier named Hadfield who had been several times wounded in the head, and at his trial was proved insane and committed to an asylum for life.

1801. January. It was undoubtedly the intention of Pitt to carry a measure of Catholic Emancipation as soon after the Union as possible, but he had been careful in his speeches not to make any direct promises. There is also no doubt that the whole of the Cabinet were prepared to support him in 1799, for at a meeting, at which Castlereagh was directed to attend, the Ministers went so far as to discuss "whether an immediate declaration to the Catholics would not be advisable, and

[1] Jesse's "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii. p. 234.

whether an assurance should not be given them in the event of the Union being accomplished, of their objects being submitted with the countenance of Government to the United Parliament upon a peace."[1] 1801. January.

This idea was ultimately laid aside for fear of alienating the Protestants, and Lord Cornwallis was enabled "to accomplish his purpose without giving the Catholics any direct assurance of being gratified, and throughout the contest earnestly avoided being driven to such an expedient." It does not therefore appear that any one was absolutely pledged to the measure, but it is clear that the Catholics hoped that some measure of relief would speedily be given. Although the Cabinet was favourable, it is doubtful whether the House of Lords would have granted it at this date, the Bishop of Lincoln clearly stating that he was "satisfied it never can be carried through the House of Lords."[2] In the House of Commons, if made a question of confidence in the Government, it might have passed, but would certainly have seriously offended the consciences of most of the members. Under any circumstances it is certain that the King would have opposed it with all his power, not so much because of his religious prejudices, as because he was convinced it was against the law of the land as stated in the Coronation Oath.[3]

In February 1795 George III. had expressed to his Ministers his determination to maintain the Test Act, and after Lord Fitzwilliam had been recalled from Ireland he wrote to Lord Kenyon for his opinion, and also for that of the Attorney-General. On the 11th of March they thus replied: "Though the Test Act appears to be a very wise law, and in point of sound policy not to be departed from, yet it seems that it might be repealed or altered without any breach of 1795.

[1] Castlereagh to Pitt, January 1, 1801. "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 10.

[2] Jesse's "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii. p. 240.

[3] The following are the exact words of the Oath (1 William and Mary, c. 6), Archbishop or Bishop. "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the Churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain unto them or any of them?" King and Queen: "All this I promise to do."

1795. the Coronation Oath or Act of Settlement."[1] Unfortunately, at the same time the King, without informing the other two, consulted the Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, who gave an opinion widely differing from theirs, but was very careful to conceal this fact from the other Ministers.

In his letter to the King on March 5, 1795, he evidently endeavoured, without binding himself to an absolute opinion, to curry favour with his royal master by flattering his already formed opinion. "The only laws which now affect Papists in Ireland are the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, the Test Act and the Bill of Rights. The question deserves serious investigation how far the King can give his assent to a repeal of any one of these acts without a breach of his Coronation Oath and the Articles of Union with Scotland. The construction put upon the Coronation Oath by Parliament at the Revolution seems strongly marked in the journals of the House of Commons." "This leads to the implication that the Coronation Oath was understood at the Revolution to bind the Crown not to assent to a repeal of any of the existing laws at the Revolution, or which were then enacted for the maintenance and defence of the Protestant religion as by law established."[2]

As the action of the Government of 1689 was the point on which the Chancellor based his contention, it is interesting to note what actually occurred at that date. During the debate on the second reading of the Bill settling the Coronation Oath, Mr. Hampden, junior, quoted from the Oaths of Edward the Confessor, which were "always according to the laws that shall be made," and not according to the laws in being. Following this line of argument many members wished to substitute for the words "established by law" in the Oath, "established, or shall be established by law," but in spite of a number of speeches in its favour the original words were retained by 188 votes to 149.[3] On the third reading of the Bill Mr. Pelham moved a rider to the effect that no clause in the Act should be understood to bind the kings or queens of this

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 263.
[2] Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," vol. vi. p. 297.
[3] "Parliamentary History," vol. v. pp. 199–206.

realm so as to prevent them giving their assent to any Bill sent up by Parliament "for the taking away or altering any Form or Ceremony in the Established Church, so as to the Doctrines of the said Church a public Liturgy and the Episcopal Government of it be preserved." 1795.

It was obvious that this was unnecessary; and a member, Mr. Finch, excellently explained the matter: "Now these words 'established by law' hinder not the King from passing any Bill for ease of Dissenters, and when this is passed the Oath remains." After a short debate the rider was withdrawn and the Bill passed.[1] It is therefore apparent that the Chancellor's contention was perfectly unjustifiable, and we are forced to conclude that he gave his opinion for the sole purpose of alarming the King, and thus causing him to be hostile to the measure. Instead of explaining the true meaning of the Oath in his letter he continued in a manner which could only frighten the King still further. "Another question arises by the Act limiting the succession to the Crown, by which a forfeiture of the Crown is expressly enacted if the King upon the throne should hold communion with, or be reconciled to, the Church of Rome. May or may not a repeal of the Act of Supremacy, and the establishing the Popish religion in any of the hereditary dominions, be invidiously construed as amounting to a reconciliation with the Church of Rome?"

With such advice one cannot be surprised that George III. was strongly adverse to taking a step which might cost him his throne, and he therefore wrote to Pitt, "The more I reflect on this subject the more I feel the danger of the proposition."[2] From the date of the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam until after the Union the question was not again mooted, and it was not until September 1800 that the King and the Chancellor heard of the plan for the emancipation of the Catholics which had been devised by Pitt, Grenville, Dundas, and Castlereagh, but which it was intended should not be submitted to the Crown until it was matured. 1800. September.

On September 25th Pitt wrote to Loughborough in

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. v. p. 209.
[2] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 299.

1800. September. confidence mentioning that he had fixed next Tuesday for the Cabinet, and that he was anxious to have the benefit of his presence: "The chief points besides the great question on the general state of the Catholics relate to some arrangement about tithes, and a provision for the Catholic and Dissenting Clergy."[1] Loughborough appears to have shown this letter to the King, and incensed him against the Ministers for proceeding on such an important affair without his knowledge. On the 30th he attended the Cabinet, and was the only Minister who opposed Pitt's simple plan to abolish the civil disabilities on account of religious belief, by substituting the old common law oath of allegiance, which had been for centuries considered sufficient, for the oaths of supremacy and abjuration. He declared he had studied the matter closely, and was preparing a Bill to carry out his views, but desired to mature the measure; and knowing nothing of his secret conferences with the King on the subject his colleagues hoped he would become reconciled to Pitt's plan before Parliament met, so that the project might be presented by an unanimous Cabinet. Instead of doing so he set to work to compose an elaborate paper to influence the royal mind against the project. The general idea was to instil a fear of the dangers to be expected from the Catholics, for he does not now make any reference to the Coronation Oath as binding the King: "Let their political equality be once admitted, it cannot be supposed that they should long refrain from those external demonstrations of their religion which, in their conception, are acts of duty; and from thence tumults might be expected to rise which from small beginnings would disturb the quiet of the State."[2] Not only did Lord Loughborough endeavour to influence the King behind the backs of his colleagues, but he was also undoubtedly concerned in a cabal. He was very intimate with Lord Auckland, who was brother-in-law of Dr. Moore, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and although the motives of the Chancellor may be left to the imagination of the reader, it is certain that the Primate wrote to the King strongly deprecating the design of a Roman Catholic Relief

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 306.
[2] Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. i., Appendix, p. 504.

Bill.[1] The Archbishop of Armagh and the Bishop of London were also opposed to the plan. 1800. September.

In January 1801 the Cabinet resumed its sittings, but it soon became evident that the Ministers were not so favourably disposed as in 1799. The Chancellor steadily maintained his ground, and Lord Westmoreland now joined him. Lord Liverpool was absent but wrote that he was opposed, Lord Chatham was also absent but was thought to be adverse also, and the Duke of Portland was undecided but inclined against the Catholic cause. The rest of the Cabinet supported Pitt. While the question was thus undecided the matter was brought to a crisis by the King himself. Referring to Lord Castlereagh, at his levee on the 28th of January, he suddenly asked Dundas, "What is it that this young lord has brought over which they are going to throw at my head?" He then continued in a loud tone, "The most jacobinical thing I ever heard of! I shall reckon any man my personal enemy who proposes any such measure."[2] 1801. January.

On the next day the King wrote to the Speaker, Mr. Addington, from the Queen's House, stating that he would not be surprised at his desire to communicate to him the very strong apprehension he conceived, "that the most mischievous measure is in contemplation to be brought forward in the first session of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, and this by one styling himself a friend to administration—Lord Castlereagh; this is no less than the placing the Roman Catholics of the kingdom in an equal state of right to sit in both Houses of Parliament and hold offices of trust and emolument with those of the Established Church." He then proceeded to state that should it be brought forward he should conceive it a duty publicly to express his disapprobation of it, and asks the Speaker to see Mr. Pitt, and open his eyes "to the danger arising from the agitating this improper question."[3]

Mr. Addington therefore called on Pitt and apparently considered he had succeeded in influencing his determina-

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 267.
[2] "Life of Wilberforce," by his Son. Vol. iii. p. 7.
[3] Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 286.

1801. January. tion, for he wrote to the King a letter which has not been preserved, but which elicited the following reply dated January 31, 1801: "The King has just received Mr. Speaker's letter, and is highly pleased at the just grounds to hope that Mr. Pitt will see the impropriety of his giving countenance to a proposition not less big with danger than absurdity. He shall be highly gratified by seeing the Speaker either this evening or to-morrow at eight o'clock, whichever may be most convenient." The Speaker obeyed the command that evening, and the King having ascertained that Pitt intended to persevere with the measure, at once asked him to undertake the conduct of affairs. When he requested to be excused, the King said to him, "Lay your hand on your heart and ask yourself where I am to turn for support if you do not stand by me."

Addington found it impossible to answer this question, but was still so reluctant to accept the proffered honour that he had another interview with Pitt, who then said to him, "I see nothing but ruin, Addington, if you hesitate." The Prime Minister had now thoroughly decided on the course he intended to pursue, for he understood after the vehement language the King had used in public, that there was little or no hope of prevailing upon him to accept the measure, but he considered his own duty was clearly to insist upon it or retire, although he intended to support any new administration which Addington could form. He therefore, on January 31st, wrote to the King, stating that it would have been his duty to submit to his Majesty before Parliament met the result of the best consideration which his confidential servants could give to the important questions "respecting the Catholics and Dissenters which must naturally be agitated in consequence of the Union."

He next stated, "He is on full consideration convinced that the measure would be attended with no danger to the Established Church, or to the Protestant interest in Great Britain or Ireland," and proceeds to argue that with certain pledges, and by attaching the Popish clergy to the Government by "making them dependent for a part of their provision (under proper regulations) on the State, and by also subjecting them to superintendence and control," "that a new

security might be obtained for the civil and ecclesiastical Constitution of this country." If his Majesty's objections were not removed after due consideration it was his wish to be released from a situation which he felt he could not continue to fill to the greatest advantage.[1] 1801. January.

The King received this on February 1st, and after consulting with Mr. Addington answered it the same day. After mentioning his conception of the absolute binding obligation of the Coronation Oath, he continued: "This principle of duty must therefore prevent me from discussing any proposition tending to destroy this groundwork of our happy Constitution, and much more so that mentioned by Mr. Pitt, which is no less than the complete overthrow of the whole fabric."[2] He continues: "My opinions are not those formed on the moment, but such as I have imbibed for forty years, and from which I can never depart," and offers to abstain from speaking of the subject if "those who unfortunately differ with me will keep this subject at rest. He hopes Mr. Pitt's "sense of duty will prevent his retiring from his present situation" to the end of his (the King's) life. 1801. February.

Pitt answered on the 3rd that the final decision of his Majesty, and "his own unalterable sense of the line which public duty requires from him," must cause him to be released as soon as possible from his present situation,[3] and on the 5th the King agrees to accept his resignation when he had had time to form a new administration.

These events, leading to the resignation of Pitt,[4] are the most extraordinary and most difficult to understand in his whole life. He knew the King's opinion on the Catholic question long before the Union, and yet he did not hesitate to hold out hopes to the Catholics, when he wished for their aid, without mentioning the subject to him. After the Union, instead of first consulting the King, he deliberately arranged that the Cabinet should present an unanimous petition[5] and

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii., Appendix, p. 23.
[2] Ibid., p. 29.
[3] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii., Appendix, p. 30.
[4] Ibid., p. 31.
[5] It must be remembered that it was not by any means necessary that Cabinet decisions should be always regarded as unanimous at this date.

1801. February. then at once proceed with the measure. He must have known that George III. was the last man to be overawed or suddenly surprised into acquiescence, and that the only way to overcome his dislike to a measure was by steady and persistent argument, as was well shown when he had persuaded him to allow Lord Malmesbury to negotiate the second time with France, and when he eventually agreed to the recall of the Duke of York from the Netherlands. But if the Prime Minister had decided on this course of procedure it was manifestly his duty to carry it out to the end, and to show clearly that if he resigned he would throw all the weight of his influence against any anti-Catholic Government which could be formed. Instead of doing this he resigned with great reluctance, and offered to support a Ministry with whom he disagreed on the main question of the hour. Dundas, Grenville, Windham, Cornwallis, Castlereagh, and Canning resigned with him, but without giving any express or implied understanding to support the new Government, although Pitt pressed them to do so.[1]

The contention of the Opposition that Pitt only resigned in order to save himself from the necessity of emancipating the Catholics,[2] is manifestly not true, because for years he had shown himself anxious to advance some measure for that purpose. On the other hand, no definite promises, so far as we can gather from the published correspondence of the period, had been given either by the English or Irish Governments to the Catholics, and Ireland after the Union seems to have settled down at once without a trace of agitation, so that it is probable that the people, left to themselves, would not have troubled about the question at all. But the fact that Pitt, Cornwallis, and Castlereagh considered it necessary to resign at once because the King refused to allow a measure to be brought forward within six months of the passing of the Act of Union, must cause us to believe that they were more deeply committed to it than the published evidence indicates. That Pitt was deeply influenced by a desire to please the King is evident, and it is therefore the more surprising that he should not have

[1] Pellew's "Life of Sidmouth," vol. i. p. 299.
[2] "Castlereagh Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 69.

frankly confessed his moral obligations at the time of the Union, and trusted that the King's strong desire for it would have caused him to give a promise that it should be speedily followed by some measure of relief for the Catholics. But if he decided to act otherwise it is extraordinary that at the critical moment he should have resigned, and then decided to support another Minister. All this would point to the fact that some other reason existed for his action, but if so there is no evidence to show what it was. 1801. February.

If Pitt were placed in an embarrassing position by his inability to fulfil his moral obligations, Cornwallis and Castlereagh, who had been in constant communication with the Catholics in Ireland, were still more unpleasantly situated. It was indeed very necessary at once to pacify their Catholic supporters, and prevent them demonstrating in a hostile manner. The Viceroy therefore informed their leaders by a circular letter that the outgoing Ministers had resigned because they considered this line of conduct most likely to contribute to the ultimate success of the cause, and urged them not to do anything which could justify their opponents in denouncing them. A second letter pointed out that "the Catholics should be sensible of the benefit they possess by having so many characters of eminence pledged not to embark in the service of Government except on the terms of the Catholic privileges being obtained."[1] Lord Cornwallis was undoubtedly very indiscreet to have written such a distinct pledge as this, and when he afterwards accepted an appointment and was asked a question on the subject he stated that he "never received authority, directly or indirectly, from any member of administration who resigned his office, to give a pledge that he would not embark again in the service of Government except on the terms of the Catholic privileges being obtained."[2]

Nevertheless he afterwards wrote, "The papers which were circulated among the Catholics have done much good. It would perhaps have been better not to have inserted the

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 348.

[2] In answer to the historian Plowden. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 349.

1801. February. word *pledge;* it was, however, used in a letter which I received from Mr. Dundas."[1] Meanwhile Mr. Addington was forming his administration, and it is satisfactory to record that Lord Loughborough, whose character the King appears to have correctly gauged, was not reappointed Chancellor, and Lord Eldon succeeded to that office. The remainder of the Cabinet ultimately consisted of Lords Chatham, Westmoreland, and St. Vincent, and the Duke of Portland in the House of Lords, and Lords Hobart, Lewisham, and Hawkesbury, Foreign Secretary, in the Commons. On February 18th, according to his promise, Pitt brought forward the Budget and the new taxes for the year. He asked for a loan of twenty-five millions and a half for England, and a million and a half for Ireland. To meet the charge thus accruing, he proposed new taxes upon a number of objects, such as tea, timber, paper, and horses, which were calculated to produce £1,794,000 per annum, but so obvious was the necessity that no opposition was raised to them.

In spite of these satisfactory arrangements for the King he was still brooding on the Coronation Oath, and on one occasion caused it to be read to him, remarking, "Where is that power on earth to absolve me from the due observance of every sentence of that oath? No—I had rather beg my bread from door to door throughout Europe than consent to any such measure."[2] On another occasion, at the end of the first week in February, he read out the Oath to his family, and added, "If I violate it, I am no more legal sovereign of this country, but it falls to the House of Savoy."[3] There can thus be little doubt that the second mental derangement of George III. was due to the worry and anxiety of the Catholic question, and that the meaning of the Oath, and the fear of losing his Crown, appeared to him in quite a different light to that in which it would have done if his mind had not been so strongly affected by the Chancellor's arguments. The intentions of the Government after the Revolution were clear enough, but it is obvious that any succeeding Government could alter the Oath if they wished,

[1] From Cornwallis to Major-General Ross. "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol., iii. p. 380.

[2] Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. i. p. 286.

[3] "Diaries of Lord Malmesbury," vol. iv. p. 21.

and, although it would have bordered on the politics of comic opera, Pitt's Government might even have passed a measure enacting that any step he took towards the alteration of the law could not affect his security as monarch. Constitutional experts understood that the words referred to the King as head of the executive, and not as a part of the legislature, but this view only appeared to him as "metaphysical." 1801. February.

By the middle of February the King's mind was quite deranged, but in his lucid intervals he referred to the question which entirely occupied his thoughts. Occasionally he could sign papers, but for many days he did not see his Ministers, and Pitt and Addington held many conferences on the question of a Regency. The Prince of Wales also consulted Pitt, who clearly stated that he could only consent to advise if he would not confer with the Opposition, to which the Prince agreed. On March 2nd a crisis occurred and the King slowly recovered, but it was still doubtful if it would be possible to prolong the interregnum much longer. Fox was now disposed to acquiesce in a Regency, with limited powers of creating peers as proposed by Pitt in 1788, and returned to his seat in the House of Commons, prepared, if necessary, to take part in a new administration. Lord Loughborough, the prince of time-servers, then endeavoured to ingratiate himself with Fox, but he knowing full well his true character, intended, if he formed the Government, to give the Great Seal to Lord Thurlow. All these new intrigues were fortunately set at rest by the King's convalescence, and some of his first words were in reference to Pitt, "Tell him I am now quite well—quite recovered from my illness, but what has *he* not to answer for who is the cause of my having been ill at all?"[1] The author of the cause of the King's illness was not Pitt but Loughborough, whose action in terrifying his royal master for his own ends was little short of criminal. But Pitt was much moved by the King's reproof and at once conveyed to him an assurance that he would never again during his Majesty's reign bring forward the Catholic question. This information is conveyed in a letter from the Bishop of Lincoln to Mr. Rose: "Recollect that when the King was recovering from his illness,

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 303.

1801. February. Mr. Pitt saw Dr. T. Willis at Mr. Addington's; and, before Mr. Addington, authorised Dr. Willis to tell his Majesty that during his reign he would *never* agitate the Catholic question, that is whether *in* office or *out* of office."[1]

Pitt has been severely criticised for taking this step,[2] but it seems to me that his action can be justified by the simple reason that he knew it was absolutely impossible to gain the King's consent to the measure, and thus it was useless ever to bring it forward again. As a statesman, therefore, he merely accepted the inevitable, and as a man he was so kind and considerate as to wish to relieve the King of his greatest anxiety. It is true he might have retired into private life to mark his determination to keep his implied promises or to give up politics, but that could not have benefited the Catholics, and probably he himself considered, would be detrimental to the interests of the country. Having resigned sooner than force on the Catholic measure, and then decided to support Mr. Addington, his action in assuring the King that he would never agitate the question again seems logical enough. He could not foresee that over a quarter of a century would elapse before justice would be granted to the Catholics, or his action might have been different in the first place, nor can we blame him for his lack of political prescience, for it is obvious to the most elementary student of politics that it is the one subject on which it is absolutely impossible to prophesy. Unlike the experiments in natural science, in which the results can be foretold with a considerable degree of accuracy, experiments in practical politics may or may not be followed by the desired effects. In fact it can be almost laid down as law that the expected result does not follow. During last century the war against republican France, expected to be a matter of months, lasted over twenty years; and a century after history repeated itself in the Transvaal. The Crimean War and the Berlin Congress have neither of them fulfilled the anticipations of those who conducted the diplomacy,

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iv. p. 304.

[2] Mr. Lecky says, "In my opinion, it is impossible by any legitimate argument to justify his conduct, and it leaves a deep stain upon his character both as a statesman and as a man."—"History of England in the Eighteenth Century," vol. viii. p. 523.

and in domestic legislation the Reform Acts have certainly not given that democratic character to the Government which was expected by those who agitated for them. The repeal of the Corn Laws did *not* send down the price of wheat, and the general principles of Free Trade have not been adopted by any other country, nor have our Colonies proved to be an useless burden. In spite of all the Land Laws for Ireland politicians are still working for a repeal of the Union, and the people still emigrating to the United States. 1801. February.

Lord Malmesbury's opinion of Pitt at this time is well worth noting: "He has discovered himself from what has passed to have an overweening ambition, great and opinionative presumption, and, perhaps, not quite correct constitutional ideas with regard to the respect and attention due to the Crown; . . . he has lost much of his popularity, and of the public good opinion from his conduct at this period; . . . from the well-timed check of adversity he has now received, two very great and good changes may be operated in his character; he may learn moderation, becoming pliancy, and a right respect to the Crown." [1]

Now that Pitt had announced his intention of abandoning the Catholics, his friends considered he ought not to retire, or rather that he ought to return to his situation, for although *de facto* Prime Minister he was not *de jure*. They therefore urged Addington to advise the King to invite Pitt to continue in office; but it was scarcely to be expected that the new Minister, who had given up the office of Speaker on the express understanding that he should succeed to the head of the administration, should acquiesce in such a proposal, but he told them that they might mention the matter to the King if they wished.[2] Pitt finally put an end to the project by saying he thought it was improper to make any such application, and that he intended to support the new administration strenuously, and on the 14th of March he resigned formally. Lord Hardwicke was at once appointed to 1801. March.

[1] March 7th, "Malmesbury Diaries," vol. iv. p. 33.

[2] "Addington stiffens against any share of power with Pitt; replies very coldly and formally to a letter from Lord Camden, in which he intimates a wish that Government should be assisted with the abilities of their friend Pitt in office."—Ibid., p. 45.

1801. March. succeed Cornwallis, but refused to take up the office until a Commander-in-Chief for Ireland had been found, and it was not until Sir William Medows accepted that post in May that he went into residence. Oddly enough the people for whom all the trouble and anxiety had been occasioned did not appear to concern themselves in the matter, and seemed to be far more indifferent to the postponement of the Catholic claims than they were to the question of Union. The other kindred question of commutation of tithes was unfortunately dropped with the main measure, and in spite of the fact that all Irish statesmen agreed that the existing system was the most fertile cause of crime, nothing was done for over thirty years. The plan for the provision to the Catholic clergy, although urged strongly by Cornwallis and agreed to by Addington, was also not carried out, and thus one after the other the rosy promises were broken, and the Irish were left practically in the same condition as before, but minus their Legislature.

CHAPTER XIV

Peace of Lunéville, February 9, 1801—English ships shut out from Neapolitan ports—The maritime laws—Nelson and Parker sent to the Baltic—Battle of Copenhagen, April 2nd—Nelson negotiates with the Crown Prince of Denmark—Armistice for fourteen weeks—Murder of Czar of Russia—Reversal of his policy—Kleber refuses to ratify Convention of El Arish—Expedition of Sir Ralph Abercromby to Egypt—French shut up in Cairo and ultimately defeated at Alexandria—Negotiations for peace commenced—The question of Malta debated—Cornwallis sent to Paris—Stipulations concerning the Knights of Malta—Peace of Amiens—Clause X. of the Treaty—Exultation in France—Satisfactory arrangement of the maritime law—Bonaparte breaking his obligations—New constitutions for Holland, Italy, and Switzerland.

THE Peace of Lunéville concluded between France and the Emperor on February 9, 1801, was one more heavy blow directed against the integrity of the German Empire, already weakened by Prussia at the treaty of Basle. Without a reference to the Diet of the Empire Francis practically ceded to France all the minor German States west of the Rhine without any reserve, and promised to compensate the dispossessed lay sovereigns in any manner approved of by France. 1801. February.

Naples was absolutely at the mercy of the Republic, but as the King had the sympathy of the Czar, who was now friendly disposed towards Bonaparte, the Bourbons were allowed to remain on the throne, and received peace on the condition that no English ships should be allowed in Neapolitan ports.[1]

England was once more in a position of splendid isolation, but her sailors were ready and eager to destroy the new fleets which the northern coalition had brought against her. The point in dispute was one which was agitated

[1] Murat was to deliver a letter to the Russian Ambassador at Naples, stating, "Que la seule chose que puisse l'empêcher d'aller à Naples, c'est que le roi reconnaissance, la protection spéciale de l'Empereur de Russie, et mette embargo sur tous les bâtiments anglais, jusqu'à ce que ceux-ci aient reconnu le principe de la souveraineté des mers;" Bonaparte to Talleyrand, February 4, 1801. "Correspondence," vol. vii. p. 5.

1801. February

during every war between sea-going Powers, and one which interested all those countries whose carrying trade was crippled by the strongest naval Power. Great Britain insisted upon seizing all the property of her enemies, whether sailing under a neutral flag or not, and to confiscate not only arms and ammunition but wheat, provisions, hemp, iron, pitch, and in fact practically everything which an army or navy could possibly require, and which a neutral Power was providing and carrying to one of her enemies. Further, she insisted that the mere fact of declaring a port to be blockaded was sufficient, without stationing there a squadron, to warrant the capture of any vessels making the port. It was agreed by all that a belligerent might search a neutral for contraband of war, and that a neutral vessel attempting to enter a blockaded port was liable to seizure, but it was contended by the northern coalition that the blockade must actually exist. Each side strained international law to the utmost, but there is no doubt that the Czar was quite unjustified in seizing all the British vessels in his ports, when at peace with England. This indeed was virtually an act of piracy, but the statement of the Allied Powers in a condition of Armed Neutrality that they would resist by force the seizure of French property on their ships was necessarily treated as a declaration of war.

1801. March.

On January 17, 1801, Nelson hoisted his flag on the *San Josef* at Plymouth, and was ordered to join Sir Hyde Parker at Yarmouth in March, whence they sailed for the Baltic with seventeen sail of the line, for the purpose of coercing the Danes.[1] Although Sir Hyde was senior officer he both literally and metaphorically kept in the background, and the operations were carried out by Nelson. On the 30th the fleet reached the Sound, the Swedish batteries commanding it not opening fire, but the Danish forts at Elsinore poured a storm of shot into the ships, fortunately without doing much damage. The night of the 30th was occupied in sounding and laying down fresh buoys round the Middle Ground, a great shoal from which the Danes had removed these marks. On the 31st the position of the Danish fleet

[1] See "Narrative of events connected with the conduct of Lord Nelson in the Baltic, 1801."—"Nelson Despatches," vol. iv. pp. 299–304.

formed a direct line eastwards from the Trekroner battery, and extended two miles along the coast to Amager. It consisted of seven line-of-battleships, ten floating batteries, one bomb rigged ship, and two or three smaller craft in addition. There was also on the coast of Amager several batteries within a long range of the King's Channel; and off the harbour mouth to the westward of Trekroner were moored four line-of-battleships and a frigate. The Commander-in-Chief now left everything to Lord Nelson, and gave him twelve line-of-battleships, which on April 1st moved and anchored off Dragor point two miles from the enemy. 1801. March.

On board the *Elephant*, on the night of April 1st, Nelson sat down with a party consisting of Captains Foley, Hardy, Freemantle, Riou Inman, Admiral Graves, and a few others. About 9.30 next morning, the wind being fair, the fleet sailed for the Channel, the *Edgar* leading, the *Polyphemus* following with the *Isis*, *Bellona*, and *Russell*. The action began at 10 A.M., the *Elephant's* place being in the centre opposite to the Danish Commodore Fischer in the *Dannebrog*, the average distance between the hostile ships being nearly a cable's length. Nelson wished to get nearer but the pilots dreaded the shoal water, with some reason, for even as it was three ships ran aground. At 1 P.M. the English were suffering badly; both the *Isis*, which was receiving a heavy fire, and the *Bellona* being badly injured. About this time a signal was thrown out by Sir Hyde from the *London* for the action to cease, but Nelson disregarded it and continued firing. About 2 P.M. the greater part of the Danish fleet were silenced, the carnage on board their ships having been terrific.[1] 1801. April. Battle of Copenhagen.

The *Dannebrog* was on fire, and the Commodore had struck his pennant and left her, but yet she fired at a boat sent to take possession. The retaliation was immediate, for a perfect hail of grape shot was poured into her, which killed or wounded almost every man left aboard. Some of the other prizes behaving in a similar manner, Nelson then wrote to the Crown Prince, addressing the letter "To the brothers of Englishmen, the Danes," and saying, "Lord

[1] Nicolas, "Nelson Despatches," vol. iv. p. 309. Laughton, p. 256.

1801. April. Nelson has directions to spare Denmark when no longer resisting; but if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, Lord Nelson will be obliged to set on fire all the floating batteries he has taken, without having the power of saving the brave Danes who have defended them."[1] The answer of the Prince was to inquire more minutely into the purport of the message, and Nelson wrote back that his object was for purposes of humanity, and that he consented that hostilities should cease until he could take his prizes and land the wounded Danes.

Next day Nelson went on shore, dined at the Palace, and had a conversation of two hours with the Prince, who stated that his object, as Prince of a commercial nation, was to be at peace with all the world, but that he feared Russia. However, on April 9th, an armistice was agreed upon for fourteen weeks, the chief points being that the Armed Neutrality, as far as related to Denmark, should be suspended; that the Danish ships should remain in their present actual situation as to armaments, equipment, and position; that the British fleet should provide themselves at Copenhagen with everything which it should require for the health and comfort of the crews, but should not molest the Danish territory, ships, or coasting trade.

The object of this armistice was to enable Nelson to use Copenhagen as a base, and to sally forth to destroy the fleets of Sweden and Russia. An unexpected event now cut short the coalition of the Northern Powers. The Czar was murdered on March 23rd, his violent temper and irresponsible orders, enforced by a tyrannical abuse of his autocratic position, having embittered him to the whole Court and Government. The Grand Duke Alexander immediately reversed the policy of his father and sent pacific overtures both to London and to the Admiral at Copenhagen. The destruction of the Danish fleet and the loss of life was thus, as it happened, unnecessary, but that was no reason why the Admiral and sailors should not be rewarded and honoured for carrying out their duty so ably, and, although a great deal of criticism was directed against Nelson both for the justice and method of the action, the thanks of

[1] Nicolas, "Despatches," vol. iv. p. 315.

both Houses of Parliament were voted on April 16th to Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, and the other officers and men. Nelson was also honoured by being raised a step in the peerage, becoming a Viscount. But medals were not conferred on the captains, nor did the City of London vote its thanks to Lord Nelson and his companions, omissions which he deeply felt and resented. It is also curious that the battle was not mentioned in the King's speech in Parliament in the October following.[1] 1801. April.

Authorities differ considerably about the question of Nelson's disobedience to the orders of Admiral Parker, for while Laughton states that there are reasons to believe the two Admirals had a private agreement, Southey gives the story as if Parker meant it to be obeyed; and that Nelson turned to his captain, saying, "D——n the signal! keep mine for closer battle flying! That's the way to answer such signals; nail mine to the mast!"[2] But whatever may be the truth it is certain that Parker wrote home to the First Lord of the Admiralty stating that the battle ought not to have been fought. However, the result was so glorious that the Ministers showed they overlooked the act of disobedience, if it were such, by thanks and promotion. 1801. February.

Meanwhile in Egypt Kleber had refused to ratify the Convention of El Arish, which the British Government were willing to abide by, since it had been sanctioned by a British officer, even although he was acting without instructions. It became necessary, therefore, to dislodge the French by force as soon as possible, particularly as the Cabinet had secret information from France that a naval force was to be sent out to Egypt under Admiral Ganteaume.[3] Sir Ralph Abercromby was therefore de-

[1] Sir H. Nicolas, "Nelson Despatches," vol. iv. p. 331.

[2] Southey's "Life of Nelson," p. 248.

[3] February 7, 1801: "The fleet of Ganteaume goes to Egypt. There are five vessels of the line, two frigates, and others. If it is too dangerous to sail to Egypt she will disembark troops at Bengazi, and they will continue by land. Bengazi is a fort on the coast of Tripoli."—Correspondence with persons in France. Reports Secret and Domestic. F. O. Records, France, 58. The idea of Napoleon was to compel the English to keep a fleet of more than twenty vessels before Brest, and thus delay the pursuit of Ganteaume. See letter to Forgail, Minister of Marine. "Correspondence of Napoleon," vol. vii. p. 7.

1801. March. spatched with 17,000 men to Aboukir Bay, to act in conjunction with some regiments of Sepoys sent from Ceylon to Kosseir on the Red Sea, and a Turkish force from Syria. But as these two forces had not arrived in time Abercromby decided to land on March 8th, and commence the campaign alone. Kleber having been assassinated by a Turkish fanatic the command devolved upon Menon, one of the least capable of the French generals, but he had about 27,000 troops at his disposal, and attempted to dispute the landing of the English with his outposts. These were, however, easily driven back, and the whole British force advanced to the heights before Alexandria after reducing the Castle of Aboukir on their right. Menon then hurried with his main army from Cairo and assailed the British position with great energy, but was repulsed at all points with a loss of several thousand men. Unfortunately the victory was marred by the fall of the gallant commander, who was badly wounded in the action, and died a few days afterwards.

1801. June. General Hutchinson succeeded Abercromby, and pursued his advantage with such vigour that in a few weeks a great part of the French were shut up in Cairo, surrounded by the English and Turkish forces which had at length arrived in June. Meanwhile Admiral Ganteaume's force appeared, and made several gallant attempts to land, but was each time prevented. The British force now possessed the whip-hand, but it was insufficient, and not equipped regularly, to lay siege to Cairo; so the terms offered at El Arish were again proposed to the French General Belliard and his army, and they were accepted on June 27th. At length the Anglo-Indian Division arrived under General Baird, and Menon, now besieged in Alexandria with the remainder of the French army, was vigorously attacked. His fleet was destroyed, his forts and outworks carried, and at length the remnant of Bonaparte's Egyptian army surrendered to the British on August 30th.

This was the first real success the British army had experienced against the troops of the Republic, and when one remembers that the latter were greatly superior in numbers, it is fair to argue that the British soldiers would

have been as victorious in Holland if it had not been for the gross incapacity of their leaders. 1801. June.

Negotiations for peace had meanwhile been carried on for some months, and, in spite of the fact that each country seemed suspicious of the designs of the other, were progressing favourably. Soon after the peace of Lunéville unofficial negotiations had commenced, and a French agent, M. Otto, had come to reside in London. The secret agents in Paris, nevertheless, were still sending to England the usual stories of threatened invasion, and optimistic stories of a possible revolution and the overthrow of Bonaparte.[1] Some of the information, however, had a decided value, such as the plan of the fortifications of Alexandria, which was forwarded in March from Paris. How much credit the Government attached to the stories of their informers it is impossible to say, but they took every precaution, and both kept a close watch on M. Otto,[2] and made extensive preparations to resist any attempted invasion. A French fleet being collected at Boulogne, at the end of July Nelson hoisted his flag on *L'Unité* frigate at Sheerness, and took command of a large force of frigates, brigs, and smaller vessels, which were placed between Orfordness and Beachy Head. On August 4th the fleet lying off Boulogne was shelled, three of the flats and a brig being sunk, and six more driven ashore much damaged. Encouraged by this success the fleet was attacked by boarders in boats on the 16th, but although several of the ships were carried by assault, they were moored to the shore and chained to each other so that they could not be removed, and after losing over a hundred men killed and wounded, the force was withdrawn. 1801. August.

Meanwhile Bonaparte was acting as an absolute autocrat, and refused to give the Treaty of Lunéville to the

[1] On February 25, 1801, information was sent of a design of Bonaparte's to invade England and to lead the force in person. March 10th, "Bonaparte is losing in popularity every day, and if some one raised himself and took the lead, he would quickly fall in opinion. He is more than ever in the confidence of Fouche and Réal."—"Reports Secret and Domestic," F. O. Records, France, 58.

[2] The daily movements of this gentleman are reported at length from March 24 to October 6, 1801. F. O. Records, France, 57.

1801. August. legislative body to ratify. He was now thinking of naming his brother Joseph as Consul of the Cisalpine Republic.[1]

The negotiations of peace in 1801 had quite a different character from those of 1796. Any hope of effectual aid by Continental allies, even when heavily financed, had finally died when Austria had been crushed. It was not a question now of restoring the Netherlands to Austria, who had neither the hope nor the wish to regain them. The integrity of the German Empire was broken both by the force of France and the mutual distrust of Prussia and Austria. The frontier of the Rhine had definitely become the Ligurian Republic, Northern Italy was the Cisalpine Republic, and Holland was content to be the Batavian Republic.

The dispute therefore resolved itself into the fate of Malta, Egypt, Ceylon, the Cape of Good Hope, Trinidad, and the other East and West Indian Settlements which had been conquered by England.

Pitt was thoroughly in favour of peace, and acted on the principle of retaining those acquisitions which "were the best calculated for confirming and securing our ancient territories," for it was not so much to the interest of England to keep possession of new conquests which were not actually required. On this ground he approved more of adding to our security in the East and West Indies than of keeping possessions in the Mediterranean. He thought that Ceylon was more valuable for the security of India than the Cape of Good Hope, and in the West Indies Trinidad was the most valuable; from Egypt the French had been driven, and that country would be restored to the Porte. He was in favour of forming a Republic of the Seven Islands to keep them out of the hands of France, and considered that we were not bound to do anything for Naples, and that if Portugal wished to be released from her engagements to us, we were absolved from any obligation to her.[2] It must of course be remembered that Pitt was not now a member of the Administration, but still his influence with the Government was paramount, and

[1] March 13th, Reports Secret and Domestic. F. O. Records, France, 58.
[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxv. p. 57 *et seq.*

he practically represented them in his speeches. Addington feebly followed Pitt, with the result that the Preliminary Articles of Peace signed at London on October 1, 1801, arranged that England should restore to France and her allies all the possessions and Colonies conquered during the present war except Ceylon and the island of Trinidad; that the Cape of Good Hope should be open to commerce and navigation of both countries equally; that the island of Malta should be evacuated by his Britannic Majesty, and restored to the Order of St. John, but should be placed under the guarantee and protection of a third Power to be agreed upon; that Egypt should be restored to the Sublime Porte; that the territories of Portugal should be preserved entire; that the French forces should evacuate Naples and Roman territory, and the English all the ports and islands which they occupied in the Mediterranean and Adriatic; that the Republic of the Seven Islands should be acknowledged by France, and that the Newfoundland fisheries should remain on the same footing as before. 1801. October.

In the debate in the House of Lords on November 3rd these preliminaries were approved by ninety-four Contents to ten Not contents, but the latter included most of the talent, Earl Spencer, Lord Grenville, the Marquis of Buckingham, and the Bishop of Rochester being among the minority. Lord Grenville strongly deprecated giving up Malta, a most important military station, and the Cape on the ground that if the French excluded us from Brazil as well, we should have no port of call when sending an armament to the East. He thought our present security less than at any time during the war, but although he differed from the present Administration he would support them in "every act of firmness and vigour which they might display in repelling those efforts and repressing those principles which have produced the present war and the sufferings of the European world."[1] 1801. November.

Lord Nelson gave it as his opinion that the possession of Malta in any hands except the French was a matter of indifference to us, and he did not think the Cape of Good Hope of much use, as "ships frequently sailed out to India

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxv. p. 171.

1801. November. without touching a port at all." Earl Spencer saw nothing but a precarious peace. Lord Pelham thought, that as our interests in the East Indies were secured by the overthrow of Tippoo, and in the West by Trinidad, there was nothing to justify a continuance of the struggle. The Bishop of Rochester was not in favour of the "pretence, and the counterfeit of peace," but the Bishop of London, anxious to disabuse the House of the idea that the whole Bench agreed with the right reverend prelate, stated he was satisfied with it.

In the House of Commons on the same day the Preliminaries were supported by Lord Castlereagh, because the war was merely a defensive one on the part of Great Britain, and we could not affect France on the Continent, unless assisted by Continental Powers. Pitt supported, using the arguments quoted above; Fox supported because he had no proofs that the Ministers could have attained a better peace. On the other hand, Mr. Windham strongly condemned on the ground that if we gave up the Mediterranean it would become "what it was once idly called, the sea of France."

Whatever opinions we may hold now of these Preliminaries of Peace, and whether we think Bonaparte would have agreed to more favourable terms or not, there can be no doubt that the action of England was a most disinterested one. Although Bonaparte could have continued to overrun the Continent, he was practically powerless to molest the English coast or colonies. If the war had continued the French shipping trade would have suffered far more severely than the British, and if the Government had refused to subsidise any more Continental armies, and relied entirely upon the navy, the cost of the war would have been very little more than keeping up a peace establishment, which would require rapidly augmenting at any moment if Bonaparte wished to break through the treaty.

As to the author of the treaty there is no doubt, and it is also certain that although Pitt could easily enforce his will on Addington and his Cabinet of mediocrities, he would have found it impossible to have induced Grenville, Dundas, and Windham to agree to such terms. It is also very

doubtful whether he would have been willing to cause the Cabinet split which must have occurred if he had proposed them when Prime Minister, so we are compelled to conclude that Pitt in office with his own friends would have been less able to arrange a peace acceptable to Bonaparte, than Pitt as a private member acting as an adviser and a supporter of Addington's Administration. But the Government had a majority in both Houses, and was strongly supported by the *Times*, which at this time opposed Pitt, and gave all the credit of the peace to Addington. The public were now tired of the war, for they understood that it had added £200,000,000 to the National Debt. Nor were they interested in such places as Malta and the Cape, which could bring but little business to the country. 1801. November.

The attitude of Fox at this time is very interesting. His party being in a hopeless minority, he had no chance of office, and was so embittered against the Tory Government that anything which tended to discredit them pleased him. He was also so strongly opposed to the Bourbon monarchy that he preferred to hear of British reverses rather than any success which could aid in the restoration of that dynasty. But besides these reasons for the position he assumed, his mind was affected by the peculiar antinational prejudice which is as clearly marked in the few as patriotic prejudice is in the many. No one of course will ever admit he is unpatriotic, and Fox would probably have resented the idea himself, but he did not hesitate to state in public, "It may be said that the peace we have made is glorious to the French Republic and glorious to the Chief Consul. Ought it not to be so? Ought not glory to be the reward of such a glorious struggle? France stood alone against a confederacy composed of all the great kingdoms of Europe; she completely baffled the attempts of those who menaced her independence." The powerful prejudice in his mind caused him only to see an attempt to menace the independence of France, and not to understand that the Powers were attempting to prevent the French overthrowing the independence of every one else. But at this time his hatred of the English Government was so great as to act with the force of fanaticism, and he wrote to Grey, "The truth is I am gone

1801. November. something further in hate to the English Government than you and the rest of my friends are, and certainly further than can with prudence be avowed. The triumph of the French Government over the English does, in fact, afford me a degree of pleasure which it is very difficult to disguise."[1]

Undoubtedly England had now lost what little military prestige she possessed in France, and the French regarded the terms of the Preliminaries of Peace as a bribe to induce Bonaparte to stay his hand.[2]

The preliminaries having been signed it was now necessary to embody them in a treaty, and the Marquis Cornwallis was sent to Paris with full powers to treat on the terms already agreed upon. He was further instructed that it is agreed that Malta should be restored to the Order of St. John under the guarantee of a third Power. "We are ready to acknowledge as the *Order those Knights who in consequence of the Declaration of August 28th of the Emperor of Russia, shall proceed to the election of a Grand Master, and the Person so elected as Grand Master.* As a consequence of this acknowledgment the island should be considered as under the protection and guaranty of the Emperor of Russia."[3] The wording of these instructions should be carefully remembered, especially the passage in italics which is underlined in the document in the Records, since the whole question of the justice of England retaining Malta afterwards depended upon the fact that these conditions were not fulfilled.

Lord Cornwallis was to suggest that in forming the garrison of Malta the Emperor of Russia should provide at least some part of the troops, and that the ports of the island should be open to all nations on their paying equal duties. Concerning Newfoundland the plenipotentiary was

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 357.

[2] Letter from Paris, November 28, 1801. "The French people think that the moderation of England is only a sop held to Bonaparte. The journalists say haughtily that if their conquests in Europe are consolidated by a general peace, France, which truly resembles Rome after the Republic, will subjugate before ten years the whole of Europe—including Great Britain, in spite of all the vast kingdom of India."—"Correspondence with Persons in France." F. O. Records, France, 58.

[3] Instructions to Lord Cornwallis. F. O. Records, France, 59.

to declare "that we cannot consent to a cession to France of any part of the island of Newfoundland, nor to any arrangement which may abridge the present limits of our fisheries." In a secret addition to the instructions Cornwallis was told to interview the Russian Ambassador on the point of the restitution of Piedmont to the King of Sardinia, but that it would be better "for you two Ambassadors to press the point to the Consul separately rather than jointly. This must not be allowed however to risk the general peace of Europe."[1] 1801. November.

At the beginning of the negotiations the British Government complained, because the French were preparing a fleet with troops to send to St. Domingo, but the latter stated that the ships were so ill armed as hardly to deserve the name of a Peace Establishment. The Cabinet nevertheless decided to send out five ships of the line to balance matters. Joseph Bonaparte, who acted as French plenipotentiary, objected to a Russian garrison in Malta, because it would give that Power too great a hold in the Mediterranean, but was willing to agree to the British suggestion that the civil government of the island should be under the Order, and that the King of Naples should have control of the various forts, while the whole arrangement should be under the guarantee of Russia. The First Consul then made the startling suggestion that all the forts should be blown up, because then nobody would want the island. He also stated that it was out of his power to make any provision for the King of Sardinia, except by establishing him there with a pension from France, and that he had rejected his offer to restore to him his Piedmontese territories after the battle of Marengo, and had thrown himself into the hands of Russia.[2] Another French proposal that a Neapolitan garrison should hold Malta for the term of three, four, or five years was refused by the British Government, until they knew what arrangements the French would propose after the lapse of that period, and they strongly objected to the French idea of destroying the forts, since if the island were retained by a strong Power, it could soon be made 1801. December.

[1] F. O. Records, France, 59.

[2] From Cornwallis, December 3, 1801. F. O. Records, France, 59.

1802. January. impregnable in any case, and if by a weak it could be captured at any moment if not fortified.[1]

Meanwhile the Court of St. Petersburg had entered into a treaty with Bonaparte to rearrange the German Empire to their mutual advantage, and to balance Austria and Prussia (October 11, 1801). It was also arranged that the definitive treaty between France and the Porte should be conducted at Constantinople under the mediation of Russia. The British Government did not object to the Porte subscribing to the treaty, but considered the secretiveness of the Russian Court as a very uncordial return for the "unreservedness" with which they had commenced the progress of the negotiations with M. Otto.[2] At this time Cornwallis was again instructed to urge that the Knights of Malta should be the persons who elected a Grand Master, and that the stipulation should be inserted in the treaty showing the importance the Government attached to this point. Many other minor points were the subject of dispute, such as the payment for the maintenance of the prisoners of war; a separate article regarding the island of Tobago and the Newfoundland fisheries. The British Government did not press for the cession of Tobago, but were very firm with regard to Newfoundland. "That France should have a commercial agent at Saint John is inconsistent with the policy of this country, as to all its Colonies and dependencies. No Consul or Commercial Agent, as far as I am informed, having ever been admitted into any British Colony."[3]

1802. March. At length the negotiations were concluded, and the Peace of Amiens was signed on March 27, 1802, between the French Republic, the King of Spain, and the Batavian Republic on the one hand, and the King of Great Britain on the other.

The clauses of the treaty are almost identical with those of the Preliminaries given above, and so need not be repeated here. Historically the most important clause is

[1] To Cornwallis, January 5, 1801. F. O. Records, France, 59.

[2] Ibid., January 9, 1802. A very full account of the correspondence is given in vol. iii. of the "Cornwallis Correspondence," but the letters of January 5th and 9th are both omitted.

[3] To Cornwallis, January 27, 1802. F. O. Records, France, 59. This letter is also omitted in the "Correspondence."

Number X., dealing with the islands of Malta, Gozo, and Comino. After drawing up regulations for the reformation of the Order of St. John, it proceeds: "They shall there form a General Chapter and proceed to the election of a Grand Master. . . . The forces of his Britannic Majesty shall evacuate the island and its dependencies within three months from the exchange of the ratifications, or sooner if possible. At that epoch it shall be given up to the Order in its present state provided the Grand Master or commissaries fully authorised, according to the statutes of the Order, shall be in the island to take possession, and that the force which is to be provided by his Sicilian Majesty as is hereafter stipulated shall have arrived there." This latter force was to consist of 2000 men, natives of the Neapolitan State, who were to serve as a garrison for the fortresses of the island, and were to remain for one year until the Order of St. John should raise a force sufficient to take their place. 1802. March.

The independence of the islands "shall be placed under the protection and guarantee of France, Great Britain, Austria, Spain, Russia, and Prussia."[1] When the conditions of the treaty were announced, it was again attacked by Grenville and Windham, but the majority of people were mildly satisfied although not enthusiastic. In France, although exterior demonstration was not so marked as at the period of the Preliminaries, satisfaction was not less real, and it was thought that Bonaparte had gained a great political triumph.[2]

During the negotiations for the Preliminaries, England was rearranging with Russia the maritime laws which had been the cause of the Northern league. Russia had at once released the British ships in her ports, and set the masters at liberty, and showed such a genuine anxiety to draw up a code of laws which should be just both to the strong and the weak that the negotiations proceeded without friction, and resulted in a Convention between the 1801. June.

[1] *Annual Register*, 1802, p. 610.

[2] "La France le proclaimait ainsi, et l'Europe entier faisait écho avec elle. Il a vaincu depuis à Austerlitz à Jéna, à Friedland, à Wagram il a vaincu en cent batailles ébloui, effrayè, soumis le monde; jamais il ne fut si grand, car jamais il ne fut si sage."—Thiers' *Consulat et l'Empire*, tome iii. p. 428.

1801. June. Courts of St. Petersburg and St. James which was signed on June 17, 1801. By this instrument it was stipulated that a blockaded port is one where "by the disposition of the power which attacks it with ships stationary or sufficiently near, there is an evident danger in entering." The articles which were to be regarded as contraband of war were also clearly named, and were limited to those which could be used for offensive or defensive purposes, such as cannon, firearms, ammunition, swords, saddles, and bridles, but all other substances were to pass free.

1801. October. The merchandise of the countries at war which should have been acquired by a neutral power, and should be transported for their account, should not be regarded as contraband of war; but this clause was limited on October 25, 1801, by a declaration stating that it does not authorise neutrals "in time of war to carry the produce or merchandise of the colonies of the belligerent power direct to the Continental possessions, nor *vice versâ* from the mother country to the enemy's colonies."[1]

The King of Denmark and Norway and the King of Sweden acceded to this convention in October, and it remained the basis of maritime law for fifty years, except when Napoleon enforced his "Continental system" on Europe.

Treaties and conventions notwithstanding, the sole law which Bonaparte bowed to was his own will, and he steadily continued his aggressions on the foreign states of the Continent. By the treaty of Lunéville the independence of the Republics of Holland, Switzerland, and Italy had been recognised by France. The restoration of Piedmont to the House of Savoy had been the condition on which the Czar had made peace.

Regardless of these engagements Bonaparte drew up a new Constitution for Holland in September 1801, in which all signs of representative institutions were abolished and replaced by a council of twelve persons, and a legislature of thirty-five, the President being elected for three months only, and chosen from the Council. The idea of course being that the Government of the State should be entirely dominated by the First Consul. Next the Cisalpine Re-

[1] *Annual Register*, 1801, p. 218.

public was invited to send representatives to Lyons to receive its new Constitution, which had previously been drawn up by Talleyrand. Four hundred and fifty Italian representatives therefore solemnly accepted the terms which they were powerless to refuse, and elected Bonaparte President of the Cisalpine State, in return for which graceful act of obedience they were permitted to call their country the Italian Republic. Piedmont, which had for a long period been governed by French Generals, was definitely annexed to France in September 1802. Switzerland was, at the same time, stirred into civil war by the usual methods, and in October 1802 the First Consul sent a French army into the country, and created for it a new Constitution which placed it entirely under the domination of France. 1802.

CHAPTER XV

Repeal of the income tax—The peace establishment—General election—Plot against the King's life—Indian affairs—The Company dissatisfied with the policy of the Governor-General—Wellesley threatens to resign—Holkar and Scindhiah fight for power—Treaty of Bassein—The Maratha campaign—The Peshwa re-enters Poona—Battle of Assaye—Bhonsla sues for peace—Defeat of Scindhiah—Adverse criticism in the House of Commons—Attitude of the Government—Hostilities recommence in Malwa—Retreat of Colonel Monson to Agra—Wellesley recalled and Cornwallis appointed—Conspiracy in Ireland—The Parties at the end of 1803.

1802. April. AFTER concluding the treaty of peace, Addington's next object was to reduce the war establishment and diminish taxation. He therefore opened the Budget on April 5, 1802, by stating that he was convinced the burdens of income tax should not be left to rest on the shoulders of the public in time of peace, "because it should be reserved for the important occasions which he trusted would not soon recur."[1] In its place he proposed to raise four additional millions per annum, through the medium of new taxes on malt, hops, and beer. The income tax had been estimated by Pitt to produce ten millions, and subsequent events proved that he had not overrated the sources from which it should have been derived, but by inaccuracy of the returns and evasions the sum actually received did not average more than half that amount. In order to meet the deficiency thus arising, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been obliged to borrow every year, mortgaging the future revenues of the tax itself, as security for repayment. The sum of £33,500,000 had in this manner been borrowed, and Addington now proposed to create enough new stock to liquidate this debt, and to issue another loan of twenty-three millions as well.[2] Pitt thoroughly approved of the repeal of the

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxvi. p. 448.

[2] See the account of Lord Bexley, Addington's Secretary to the Treasury, in "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 57.

income tax, and the country received the news with much satisfaction. The next step was to pay up the arrears on the civil list and the Prince of Wales's debts, and for these purposes a grant of £990,000 was voted. In spite of this laudable attempt to put the national finances on a sound footing, the peace establishment, rendered necessary by the uncertainty of Bonaparte's next move, was many times greater than it had ever been before. In 1792, for instance, the number of seamen voted and provided for was only 16,000, whilst in 1802 it never was less than 70,000 but was reduced to 50,000 in 1803. 1802. April.

The peace establishment of the army consisted of 95,000 regulars and 48,000 militia in Great Britain, in addition to which his Majesty might call up 24,000 more when necessary. The Irish militia numbered 18,000, but it was determined also to keep up a large proportion of yeomanry and volunteers for whom liberal allowances were voted. In June another important financial measure was brought forward for consolidating the sinking fund. By Pitt's system each Loan Act contained provisions for its own eventual liquidation, according to which every portion of the debt would have been paid off gradually. But Addington placed all the separate loans in one fund, whereby the whole debt would be discharged at the same time, calculated at about forty-five years from that date. 1802. June.

On June 28th the King closed the session, and on the following day Parliament was dissolved. In the general election the Government was supported by a large majority, the advocates of the peace being returned in most places, while Mr. Windham, in spite of his former services, brilliant talents, and local influence was defeated at Norwich and was forced to accept a nomination borough in the gift of Lord Buckingham.

The country was now enjoying the blessings of peace after nine years of war, and the feverish excitement for news of victories and defeats gave place to a passive indifference to French affairs. But the calm of the summer was disturbed by a most extraordinary plot against the King's life. Colonel Edward Despard, an Irish officer who had served with loyalty for thirty years, devised, with the aid of a

1802. November. desperate gang, the scheme of loading with ball the great gun in St. James's Park, and of discharging it at the King's carriage when he was on his way to open Parliament. The plot also embraced the ambitious design of seizing the Tower, the Bank, and other public offices, showing clearly that its originators were men of most desperate if unpractical characters. The colonel had already been arrested and imprisoned for three years on suspicion of being engaged in traitorous conspiracies, and the sense of his imagined wrongs had no doubt upset the normal balance of his intellect. As usual in these days one of the gang betrayed the plot, and on November 20th Despard and thirty-two others were arrested in the Oakley Arms, a small public-house in Lambeth. In February of the next year he was brought to trial before Lord Ellenborough and three other judges, being defended by Mr. Best, afterwards Chief Justice, and Lord Wynford. Lord Nelson and other witnesses deposed to his former good character and services, but the plot was proved without any doubt, and a verdict of guilty was returned. Ultimately, on February 21st, Despard, John Wood, Thomas Broughton, John Francis, James Sedgwick Wratten, Arthur Graham, and John Macnamara, who were adjudged to be the most responsible members of the miserable gang, were hanged and beheaded.[1]

1802. Amongst the numerous questions which were a source of anxiety to the Government at this time the threatened resignation of Lord Wellesley must be ranked. As head of a great trading company he was regarded by the Court of Directors at home as responsible to a great extent for the size of the dividends, but Wellesley was by no means content to be a commercial agent. He was, indeed, both a statesman and an Empire builder, who understood the necessity of consolidating the English rule by conquest.

Nevertheless one of his first acts had been to gain a clear insight into the financial condition of the Presidencies. He discovered that in 1798 the revenue of the Company was less than in 1793 by £165,748, while the debt had increased, so that the deficiency of the revenues in times of

[1] Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxviii. p. 346.

peace in India was over three hundred thousand pounds.[1] 1802. The new Governor-General soon inspired confidence in the money market, and the bankers and merchants came forward with large sums of money, which they willingly lent the Government, so that in 1800 the state of public credit was far more favourable, the public debt being more easily controlled, and the rate of interest being lower. With an improvement in the state of finance private trade also rapidly increased, although it was strongly opposed by the East India Company, who wished to retain their monopoly as far as possible. This monopoly was restricted in 1793 when the charter was renewed, 3000 tons of freight being allowed to private traders, but, as a matter of fact, the tonnage of Bengal private goods reached over 7000 in 1799–1800.[2]

Wellesley, in common with most other statesmen at this period, was deeply influenced by the views of Adam Smith, and was in favour of allowing, as far as possible, free trade. In this he was supported at home by Dundas, who told the Directors in April, 1800, that the trade with India was far greater than the Company was able to undertake, so that it was necessary to allow British subjects greater freedom to prevent that trade being absorbed by foreigners. The Company, with visions of decreasing dividends, bitterly opposed concessions, and appealed to their legislative monopoly which had been granted in 1793 for twenty years. They also used the curious argument that free trade with India would depopulate Great Britain, and "fill our Eastern possessions with eager adventurers, even from all parts of Europe, who would vex, harass, and perplex the weak natives, and finally endanger, if not occasion the overthrow of our dominions in the East."[3] Wellesley did not agree with such absurd speculations, and set to work to encourage trade by hiring ships on behalf of the Company, and reletting them to skippers, who then arranged their own terms with the merchants. In this manner he expected that the whole of the surplus trade,

[1] Owen, selection from Wellesley "Despatches," p. 74. See also, for financial results of Wellesley's Administration, "British India," by Mill and Wilson, vol. vi. p. 470 *et seq.*

[2] "Wellesley," by W. H. Hutton, p. 148. [3] Ibid., p. 153.

1802. which the Company could not control, would be absorbed by Englishmen and carried to London.

The dispute between the Court of Directors and the Governor-General was not, however, confined to large questions of imperial policy and freedom of trade, but was also occasioned by the manner in which Wellesley used the extensive patronage at his disposal, which did not always meet with the approval of the Directors who had their own friends at home. Several of his appointments were therefore cancelled, and men of untried capacity were sent out from England to fill the vacant places. The new Government House which Wellesley built at Calcutta seemed to the Directors an extravagance, and for these and other reasons the Court was continually hesitating whether they should recall their imperious and insubordinate Governor.

1802. January. Wellesley, chafing under the restrictions which were put upon him by the Company, at length wrote to the Court on January 1, 1802, sending in his resignation, but that this was intended chiefly as a threat is proved by the fact that in March he also wrote to Addington as follows: "I am so convinced of the public importance of my continuance in India for one season beyond January 1803, that, notwithstanding my resignation, I am ready to remain in India on the following conditions, until the close of January 1804."[1] These conditions were that the Court of Directors should ask him to continue at the head of the Government of India for another season, and assure him of their confidence and support, and that the Government should also assure him of their confidence and intention to afford him full support and protection. The Court of Directors were not to interfere with his appointments, or in the local executive administration. Wellesley particularly wished to continue in office, in order to settle the ceded provinces in Oudh, and to introduce into the territories of Fort St. George the same system of Government as that of Bengal. He was also anxious to reduce the expenses, and augment the resources of all the Presidencies during the favourable condition of peace.

1802. September. On September 26, 1802, Addington replied that he trusted the communication which he had received from the

[1] "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 77.

Directors would prove satisfactory, and assured him of the confidence of the Government.[1] In the summer of this year Lord Castlereagh, in spite of his difference of opinion regarding the Catholic question, had, with the full approval of Mr. Pitt, accepted a seat in the Cabinet as President of the Board of Control, and thus became responsible to the country for the Administration of India. 1802. September.

The general policy of Lord Wellesley had been to assert British supremacy over all the States with which the Company was brought into contact, and to act as arbiter in all disputes between the provinces. Since the death, in 1795, of Tukaji Rao Holkar, who had ruled in Indore, his sons, legitimate and illegitimate, had fought each other, and also Daulat Rao Scindhiah, for power, carrying on the contest with murder, rapine, and the most fiendish brutalities. First Holkar was successful, then Scindhiah, the Peshwa Baji Rao being the common sport of the two factions, but finally on October 25, 1802, Holkar defeated the forces of the Peshwa and Scindhiah before Poona. Baji Rao fled, and fortunately the British Resident, Colonel Close, had also left the place in September. Holkar entered the city, elected a Peshwa, and acted moderately for two months hoping to maintain his position, but the defeated Peshwa Baji Rao at once placed himself in the hands of the English, and concluded a treaty at Bassein on December 31st, by which six battalions of infantry with the usual proportion of artillery were to be permanently stationed in his dominions, while 2000 men were appointed as his bodyguard. In return for these troops, districts yielding twenty-six lacs of rupees were ceded to the Company in perpetuity, and the Peshwa agreed not to enter into treaties, or make war on other States, without consultation with the British Government.

At once the various Maratha forces showed signs of uniting to resist the foreigner, while Scindhiah and Bhonsla commenced to negotiate, and Holkar to strengthen his defences. This treaty in fact entirely altered the condition of affairs, making the British Government practically sovereign of the Indian Empire, and thus enormously increasing the responsibilities of the Company. Wellesley hoped that 1803. February.

[1] "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 80.

1803. February. Scindhiah would also come to terms, and Colonel Collins, who had received commands in December to propose to him a treaty on similar terms to that of Bassein, arrived at his camp on February 27th. But Scindhiah gave "evasive, indirect, and vexatious replies," although at the same time he gave the strongest assurances that he had no intention to obstruct the execution of the agreement between the Peshwa and the British Government.[1] Wellesley believed he was sincere, and was also confident that the Raja of Berar would not attempt to interfere. He was indeed entirely optimistic, and was of the opinion that "the advantages secured in the Carnatic may be found upon accurate examination to surpass those obtained in Mysore."[2]

1803. May. Nevertheless, the Governor of Fort St. George was induced to assemble a considerable army at Hurryhur on the Mysore frontier, ready to act as occasion might require, and the Governor of Bombay was also instructed to hold in readiness the force of that Presidency. From the army at Hurryhur, under General Stuart, a force amounting to 1709 cavalry, 7890 infantry, and 2500 horse belonging to the Raja of Mysore, advanced towards Poona on March 8th, commanded by Major-General Wellesley. On April 12th this force crossed the Toombudra, and on the 15th was close to Colonel Stevenson with 8000 men. On the 13th of May the Peshwa, attended by his brother Chimnajee Appa, and by a large suite, re-entered the city of Poona, and resumed his seat upon the musnud to the accompaniment of a British salute. Wellesley was appointed Commander-in-Chief as well as political agent. His opinion is shown in a letter he wrote on May 24th to Colonel Collins, in which he states that if Scindhiah comes to Poona "we shall know what line we are to follow . . . but if you should succeed, firstly, in drawing from Scindhiah a declaration of his peaceable intentions, and, secondly, in prevailing upon him to recross the Nerbudda as a proof of the reality of those intentions, you will deserve the thanks of your country."[3] Ten days before this the Governor-General had written to Scindhiah and the Raja of

[1] Mill and Wilson, "British India," vol. vi. p. 289.
[2] To Addington, February 12, 1803. "Life of Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 83.
[3] "Wellington Supplementary Despatches," vol. iv. p. 93.

Berar, asking them to remove their armies from the frontier, and stating that if they persisted in maintaining a warlike attitude the British Government would be compelled, in its own defence, to attack them. The object of the Governor-General now was to conquer the whole of that portion of the dominions of Scindhiah which lay between the Ganges and the Jumna, to destroy the French force by which the frontier was protected, and to include the cities of Delhi and Agra with a chain of forts sufficient to protect the navigation of the river on the right bank. 1803. May.

Mill labours to prove that the Mahratta war which followed was not a necessary one, and was caused by the treaty of Bassein, but it is evident, whatever may have been the particular points in the diplomacy, that it was very necessary to consolidate the British rule in India,[1] by rendering her allies secure against their enemies. For this purpose Bundelkhand was to be acquired, or at least so much of it as would secure the hold on Agra, while in Gujarat, Baroch with the district round it, long coveted by the Council of Bombay, was to be annexed, and in the East the province of Cuttack, in order to connect Madras with Bengal.[2] For these extensive conquests an army of 50,000 men was employed, Colonel Murray acting in Gujarat, and Wellesley with Stevenson carrying out the operations in the Deccan. No time was lost, for on August 4th Wellesley captured Ahmadnagar, and thence proceeded to Aurangabad to the river Kailna, which he crossed, and met the combined army of Scindhiah and Bhonsla on September 23rd at Assaye. 1803. August.

Wellesley originally intended to attack the right of the enemy's line, but perceiving that it was chiefly composed of cavalry, he preferred to defeat the infantry first on the left. For this purpose he crossed the river Kailna at a ford beyond their left flank, and formed the infantry in two lines, holding the British cavalry in reserve, but leaving the Mahratta and Mysore cavalry on the other side of the stream. Perceiving this move of the British the enemy changed their front and formed a line, having its right on the Kailna and its left on the Yuah, another stream flowing parallel. As the British army advanced, the guns of the enemy played 1803. September.

[1] "British India," vol. vi. p. 306.

[2] Ibid., p. 338.

1803. September. upon them with terrible effect; but still the troops did not waver, and at last the enemy were compelled to give way. The cavalry then charged them with the greatest effect, but unfortunately Lieutenant Colonel Maxwell was killed in this action. An old native trick was now practised, many of the enemy's guns, which were left in the rear of the pursuing army, being turned on to the conquerors by men who had pretended they were dead. So harassing did this become that the General found it necessary to proceed in person with a regiment of European infantry and one of native cavalry to stop their fire. At length the whole of the enemy fled, leaving ninety-eight pieces of cannon and seven standards, with 1200 dead. Of the British army 428 were killed and 113 wounded.

Colonel Stephenson arrived next day and was immediately sent in pursuit of the enemy. Marching rapidly, he reached and entered the city of Borrhampore on October 15th, and thence proceeded to Asseerghur (or the key of the Deccan), which was reached two days later. The batteries were placed in position, and opened against the fort on the 20th, when, after a few hours, the garrison offered to capitulate. In this manner were the whole of Scindhiah's dominions in the Deccan won. Colonel Stephenson now prepared to march to and conquer Gawilghur, the principal fortress of the Raja of Berar. Shortly afterwards Wellesley joined him, when the combined armies attacked and defeated the enemy at Argaum, whence they proceeded to lay siege to Gawilghur, which was taken on December 14th, when Bhonsla yielded entirely, and accepted similar terms to those granted to the Peshwa.

1803. October. Meanwhile General Lake had been equally successful in Hindustan, against the army drilled and led by a Frenchman M. Perron, who, after a few weeks' skirmishing, and the capture by Lake of Aligarh, applied for permission to retire. His place was taken by another French officer, M. Louis Bourquin, who endeavoured to prevent Lake reaching Delhi, but after fighting a fierce battle outside that city the troops of Scindhiah were put to flight and Delhi was entered in triumph. From Delhi Lake proceeded to Agra, which surrendered on October 18th, and on the 31st the main

body of Scindhiah's troops were captured or annihilated at Laswari. 1803. October.

After this Scindhiah was compelled to submit also and sue for peace. On December 30th he ceded all his territory between the Jumna and the Ganges, and to the northward of the possessions of the Rajas of Jeypoor, Jodepore, and Gohud; he ceded also the forts and territories of Baroach and Ahmednugger, and all his possessions on the south side of the Adjuntee hills to the Godavery river, and renounced all claims of every description against the British Government or any of its allies, the Subahdar of the Deccan, the Peshwa, and Anund Rao Gaekwar.[1]

Wellesley now considered that the Mahrattas were completely subdued, and wrote in reply to an address at Calcutta: "The peace which has been concluded comprehends every object of the war with every practicable security for the continuance of tranquillity."[2]

The hopes of the Governor-General were, however, destined to be disappointed, for Holkar was by no means subdued, and as is not at all unusual in the case of Empire builders the legality of his actions was being criticised at home. On March 14th Mr. Francis moved in the House of Commons that the 35th clause of the 24th of the King should be read, viz., "whereas to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of the nation; be it enacted," &c. He argued that "it would be a wiser and a safer practice not to make any laws than to suffer them to be slighted with impunity. Habits of disobedience are very catching, and they are the more dangerous in proportion to the distance of the offending parties." He then proceeded to state that "A British Governor who commences a war in India is *prima facie* doing that which the law prohibits; that his own act of itself puts him upon his defence; that he is bound to justify on the case; and that until he has so justified his conduct the presumptions are against him. . . . Is it proper or not that Parliament should know why this war was undertaken, for what purposes it has been pursued and with what success 1804. March.

[1] Mill's "British India," vol. vi. p. 381.
[2] Hutton's "Wellesley," p. 99.

1804. March. it has been attended; and finally has it the sanction and approbation of the Court of Directors and of his Majesty's Ministers?" He concluded by moving for papers on the subject between the Government of India and the Mahratta princes, and between the Governor-General and the Court of Directors.

Lord Castlereagh stated that he was ready "to admit of the propriety of an inquiry both as a matter of policy and justice," but he doubted whether such an inquiry could be safely made in the present circumstances. "The Government were not in possession of the circumstances that preceded the rupture," without which it would be impossible to form a proper estimate of the case, or to do any justice to the conduct of the Governor-General. He was ready to comply with the motion as soon as Government should be in possession of the necessary documents.[1]

1804. May. The Minister, indeed, was beginning to doubt himself, and wrote to Wellesley on May 21, 1804, asking whether the policy of annexation was permissible on the principles which Parliament had sanctioned, and whether the extent of territory would not be too great a burden.[2]

Whether the Government at home approved or not it is evident that the Governor-General was compelled to continue the war, for Holkar was actually on his march to join the confederates when the news of the battle of Assaye caused him to stop and to return to Holkar. The negotiations with that Prince, which were begun by General Lake at the end of 1803, had not indeed been at all successful, and in spite of the submission of Scindhiah all the other Mahratta chiefs were still allied against the British.[3]

On April 16th the Governor-General therefore issued orders to Generals Lake and Wellesley to commence hostilities. Lake was to march from Delhi with the army of Hindustan, and Colonel Murray to advance from Guzarat against Holkar's possessions in Malwa. Later on these orders were made the subject of a charge against Wellesley, in that he had signed them by himself without any notifica-

[1] "Parliamentary Debates," vol. i. p. 865.
[2] Hutton's "Wellesley," p. 100.
[3] Mill and Wilson, "British India," vol. vi. p. 399.

tion that it was done with the concurrence of his Council. In order to clear up the point Lord Castlereagh wrote to Lord Cornwallis to ask exactly when the Governor-General could sign alone, and he answered he thought it was only in the correspondence with native princes.[1] 1804. May.

The campaign commenced successfully, Holkar being driven from Rampura on May 16th, but Lake, instead of following him, retired to Cawnpore, sending on Colonel Monson with five battalions of native infantry and about 4000 horse to hold Holkar in check, and to endeavour to meet Colonel Murray.

Monson therefore marched to Chambal through the Mukand Wára Pass, but Murray had already retired owing to the treacherous advice of Bapoojee Sindiah.[2] Monson hearing of this also decided to retreat, and having sent the baggage and stores to Soonarah early on the morning of the 8th of July, he himself commenced to march some hours later. The detachment had only proceeded a short distance when news was brought that the irregular cavalry, which had been left behind to act as a rear-guard, had been defeated by Holkar, and that Lieutenant Lucan and several other officers were prisoners. On the next day Holkar, emboldened by this success, attacked the main body both in the front and flanks, but the steadiness of the troops enabled them to repel repeated attacks until nightfall. After this Monson retired to Kotah, but the Raja refused both to admit his force and to afford him supplies. The position of the retreating troops was now desperate in the extreme; the rains were falling heavily and the guns became so firmly sunk in the mud that they could not be moved, but the camp being without provisions it was absolutely necessary to proceed, and the guns were therefore abandoned after first being spiked. The retreat then developed into a disgraceful flight until Rampura was reached on July 29th, where Monson found two battalions of Sepoys, some irregular horse, guns, and supplies sent from Agra by Lake. This access of reinforcements was unfortunately more than balanced by the 1804. July.

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 523.
[2] Wilson's footnote, "British India," vol. vi. p. 405.

1804. July. desertion of most of Scindhiah's army, and the force was beaten in several small actions before it at length reached Agra in the end of August.

1804. August. The responsibility for this disaster must not be placed entirely on Colonel Monson, but must be shared by Colonel Murray, who retired at once from his position, and also by the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Lake, who planned the operation, and ordered the two officers to advance a great distance from effective supports, and to attack an enemy whose strength was as usual underrated. The most severe comment is made by General Wellesley in the following words: "Monson's disasters are really the greatest and the most disgraceful to our military character of any that have ever occurred. The detachment had not two days' provision; was cut off from its resources by many rivers, on which we had neither bridge nor boat; and all measures to supply the only fort (Rampoora), to which in case of emergency he might have recourse, were omitted. To employ the detachment at all was an error; but the common modes of securing its safety have been omitted."[1]

Colonel Murray's retreat had been a prime cause of Monson's disaster, but he himself had been more fortunate, and after advancing into the heart of the Holkar dominions had on August 24th seized the capital, Indore.

1804. October. Meanwhile, after Murray had escaped to Agra, Holkar advanced to Muttra, thirty miles from that city, and took possession of it, but retired when he learnt that the Commander-in-Chief was marching to relieve it from Secundra. He now planned a clever ruse; on the night of October 6th he encamped with his cavalry four miles in front of the British lines, but detached his infantry and guns. Next morning, before daybreak, Lake moved out to surprise him, but Holkar retired so quickly that he could not be caught. In the meantime his infantry and artillery appeared before Delhi, and at once commenced a siege which was continued for nine days. The city was defended most ably under the guidance of Lieutenant Colonels Ochterlony and Burn, and although the number of men was too small to allow

[1] Arthur Wellesley to Josiah Webb, Esq., September 11, 1804. "Wellington Despatches," vol. iv. p. 465.

of regular reliefs, "they sustained a siege of nine days, repelled an assault, and defended a city ten miles in circumference, and which had ever heretofore been given up at the first appearance of an enemy at its gates."[1] 1804. October.

Holkar finally retired before Lake arrived, and marched down the Doab, pillaging and laying waste, but on November 12th was caught at Dig by General Frazer, and badly beaten. A few days later Lake also advanced to Dig, which he besieged and entered on December 24th. He now determined to punish the Raja of Bhartpur who had supported Holkar, but the town of Bhartpur, fortified and well defended, resisted all his efforts. The Raja, who had lost heavily in the frequent assaults, eventually agreed to a treaty in April, by which he was to pay the sum of twenty lacs of Furruckabad rupees and to give up the additional territory with which he had been aggrandised by the Company.[2] In spite of these recent successes the disasters of Monson had now finally decided the Government to recall Wellesley. Castlereagh and Pitt (now once more Prime Minister) were anxious that Lord Cornwallis should again take the post of Governor-General, for Pitt was convinced that Lord Wellesley "had acted most imprudently and illegally." Lord Castlereagh also was strongly opposed to the subsidiary treaties which Wellesley had entered into, whereby the native princes were bound to provide a certain fixed number of troops to be at the disposal of the Company if a war should break out, in return for a guarantee. The Directors had disapproved of this system, which they considered very onerous to them; and Castlereagh and the Government considered that it was illegal, and although not wishing to abolish the treaties forthwith, were anxious to bring things back to the state laid down by the Legislature.[3] 1804. November.

On May 25th Wellesley received Castlereagh's letter announcing the reappointment of Cornwallis, who arrived on July 30th, and a fortnight later he sailed for home. 1804. July.

[1] Report of Colonel Ochterlony. Mill and Wilson, "British India," vol. vi. p. 412.

[2] Ibid., p. 429.

[3] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 523.

1805. July. With the return of Cornwallis the imperialistic policy was at once reversed. He determined to adjust all differences with Scindhiah, and to transfer to him Gwalior, and to restore to Holkar the whole of the territories and possessions which had been conquered from him by British arms. This policy was strongly opposed by Lake, but the whole of the negotiations were thrown into confusion by the death of Cornwallis on October 5th.

1805. Stay-at-home critics approach political questions from the points of view of moralists, economists, and utilitarianists, but in so doing they merely indicate their own characters, and it seems only necessary therefore in writing history to state the evidence, to sum up judicially, and to leave the reader to pronounce his own verdict. It is easy enough to understand the position of the individual who from the point of abstract justice regards all warfare, except the purely defensive variety, as immoral, and thinks that the acquisition of territory by force of arms is simple robbery; but it is not so easy to comprehend the condition of mind which, plainly and with conviction, leads to the belief that no war ever led to advantages which more than balanced the sacrifices made, and that it is not justifiable to substitute by force a higher for a lower state of civilisation. In the first place it is manifestly impossible to estimate the value of annexed territory from a commercial point of view, either by a consideration of the number of people who ultimately find a living there or of the trade which eventually is carried on with them. Again, how can we estimate the value of the security against foreign aggression attained by the possession of a bare rock, for instance, which commands an important sea or land route. What is the value of Ceylon in the hands of the English apart from its agricultural and trading properties, as an outpost of India, and how much would it not cost to render the south of the Peninsular safe if the island were in the hands of a hostile Power? The same argument manifestly applies to the frontier States of India, to Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, the Cape, and Hong Kong, all acquired at great expense by warfare. When therefore we hear the argument that the advantages acquired are not equal to the outlay in lives and treasure we must

understand that this is merely the opinion of an individual and that it is not capable of proof. It may be contended that it is impossible to estimate the value of life commercially, but that is not the case, for the simple reason that the expenditure of one hundred lives at one period may save one thousand at another, the problem being thus reduced to a sum of simple arithmetic. 1805.

The opinion of the Court of Directors is intelligible as that of a body of commercial men who had invested their capital in an undertaking, and wished to make their own and their friends' fortunes; the opinion of the Ministers is intelligible as that of the trustees of the nation who were bound by treaties, and who did not wish to undertake the management of a larger estate than they thought they could police at a time when heavily engaged in warfare; the opinion of the Governor-General is also intelligible as that of a Pro-Consul who wished to extend, consolidate, and secure the British dominions in India. Every one concerned therefore thought as one would expect he would think, and the opinion of every one who reads the story to-day depends entirely upon his own characteristic. He may be a venturesome speculative imperialist or a timid cautious anti-imperialist, but whatever the individual may think it is perfectly certain that the class of men who extend the Empire will always earn the admiration and the support of the vast majority of the nation.

While these events were happening in the most distant of the British possessions, an entirely different method of resistance to the English rule was being practised in the nearest. A new conspiracy was planned, resulting in a barbarous and brutal murder in Ireland during the month of July 1803. The prime mover was Robert Emmet, son of a physician in Dublin, and brother of the Thomas Addis Emmet whom we have described as one of the Directory of the United Irishmen in 1798. Robert Emmet was in correspondence with most of the ex-leaders of the rebellion, as well as with many friends in the French Government, whom he met frequently at Paris and Brussels during 1801. He then returned to Dublin and, at the outbreak of the war, endeavoured to revive the rebellion. Proclamations were 1803. July.

1803. July. composed and arms and ammunition purchased, the main idea being to attack simultaneously the Castle, the Pigeon House, and the Artillery Barracks at Island Bridge.[1] Before the time had arrived for the execution of these designs an accident forced the conspirators into premature action. On July 16th an explosion took place at a powder magazine which they had formed in Patrick Street, and fearing detection if they waited longer, they arranged that the rising should take place on the 23rd. The Government appear to have received secret intelligence but not to have heeded it, for which they were charged with not showing much vigilance by General Fox, brother of the famous statesman, who was now Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

During the afternoon of the 23rd small parties of men were observed to arrive from Palmerstown and other places, and to collect in the neighbourhood of Thomas Street, near one of the secret depots of arms. Soon after dark about four hundred were assembled, and pikes and blunderbusses were distributed. A few leaders then appeared and urged an attack on the Castle, but the organisation was faulty and the discipline worse, which resulted in the breaking of the party into separate bodies instead of keeping together as one. Unfortunately one of these met the coach of Lord Kilwarden, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who was hastening to Dublin from his country seat, having heard of the threatening state of affairs. With him were his daughter and his nephew, the Rev. Arthur Wolfe. The Judge was at once butchered with pikes, and his nephew, who escaped to some distance, was met by another party and shared the same fate, but his daughter was protected by two of the rebel leaders and made her way to the Castle.

After this several of the insurgent bands joined and collected in High Street with the apparent intention of attacking the Castle, but by this time parties of soldiers and police advanced against them, and after some volleys soon dispersed the whole mass. The leaders at once fled or remained in hiding, and no attempt was made to renew the insurrection. A few days' search revealed many thousand heads

[1] See account in Howell's "State Trials," vol. xxviii. p. 1178.

of pikes, and magnificent uniforms in green and gold, for the intended Generals of the new Republic. In the Imperial Parliament addresses were at once voted in reply to a message from the King, and a Bill was passed to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and to enable the Lord-Lieutenant to try all persons taken in rebellion by court-martial. Eventually Major Sirr, distinguished as the captor of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, discovered Robert Emmet in the county of Wicklow, and in the months of August and September he and nineteen fellow conspirators were brought to trial. One was acquitted and one was pardoned, but the rest with Emmet were executed. Besides these, Russell, who had formerly been a captain in the army, and a few others were subsequently tried and executed in the counties. Addington at once wrote to Lord Hardwicke that the impression was general that "intelligence respecting the dispositions and designs of the disaffected was constantly received by some persons in subordinate official situations with coldness and distrust," and suggesting some new arrangements in those departments.[1] 1803. July.

During the recess, on August 17th, a small change was also made in the Cabinet, Charles Yorke being sworn in as Home Secretary in the place of Lord Pelham, who was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on the resignation of that office by Lord Liverpool. 1803. August.

A few months afterwards, at the commencement of 1804, Mr. Wickham retired through ill health from the office of Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and the arduous post was filled by Sir Evan Nepean, who had had experience in Irish affairs when Under-Secretary at the Home Office. Addington was accused, as many other Ministers before and since, of unduly preferring his near relatives and friends to appointments of profit and responsibility to which their standing as public men hardly entitled them. Mr. Bragge, a brother-in-law, although in his first Parliament, was created Treasurer of the Navy; Mr. Adams, another brother-in-law, was a Lord of the Admiralty; Mr. Golding, his cousin, who was not in Parliament, was a Lord of

[1] Addington to Lord Hardwicke. "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 216.

1803. the Treasury, as was Mr. Bond, a new member and an old schoolfellow and friend.[1]

It is only to be expected that such appointments requiring no particular ability should be given to the friends and relatives of Ministers, and the public do not appear to have objected at this time. But at the end of 1803, signs were already apparent that the Administration would not live much longer. Fox, who continued to support the Government until October, seemed to be veering round, and wrote at the end of November that, "If the new Opposition attacked the general system of defence, I am determined to support them vigorously."[2] Before the end of the year he was listening to the overtures of the Grenville party, who wished to arrange for a combined and systematic opposition to Government, but no active steps could be taken until Pitt clearly showed his hand.

[1] *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxxix. p. 512.
[2] Lord Russell's "Memorials of Fox," vol. iii. p. 443.

CHAPTER XVI

Attacks on Pitt by all sides—Arguments of Windham—Bonaparte receives English visitors—Grievance that Malta is not evacuated—The *Ambigu* newspaper—The *Argus* and *Moniteur*—Duke of Orleans offers his services—Pitt advocates the restitution of English conquests—Addington instructs Whitworth not to promise the restitution of Malta—Opinion of Fox—Bonaparte tries to conciliate Russia—Powers suspicious of French designs—Meeting of Parliament—Grenville attacks the Government—Sebastiani's paper in the *Moniteur*—Bonaparte loses his temper at a public audience—Proposals to reinstate Pitt in office—Whitworth delivers an ultimatum—Council of St. Cloud—Declaration of war—Pitt returns to the House of Commons.

At war or at peace, in office or out, Pitt enjoyed the proud distinction of being the man who was most often singled out for attack, both by his late colleagues and the Opposition in Parliament, and by the organs of the Press, whether supporters or opponents of the Addington administration. His career is not only unique in the history of statesmen, but has a pathetic interest as showing what little real power to steer the ship of State in any particular direction may be possessed by one who holds the helm, even when supported by a powerful and faithful crew. 1785.

Nominated to this position in 1785 by the King, he at first found himself opposed by a majority in the Commons, but after working hard he won the confidence of the House, and was supported also by the country in the following year. Being ardently desirous of reforming the constituencies, he prepared a Bill for that purpose and presented it to the King for his approval. George III. as a constitutional monarch promised not to use his influence against it, but stated he did not think it would pass, and the King's forecast was as usual correct. In this Pitt was supported by Fox and the Whigs, but opposed by the owners of the rotten boroughs. In 1788 he insisted that the duty of Parliament was to settle the Regency upon the Prince of Wales subject to certain restrictions, but in this was opposed by Fox

1788. and the Whigs, who took up the anti-Liberal position that the Prince should exert the whole powers of the King as a matter of hereditary right.

Being essentially a peace-loving Minister he was compelled by the excesses of the French Revolutionists, by the exhortations of Continental Powers, and by the pressure of his own colleagues, combined with the clamour of the nation, to engage in war against France. With an anxious wish to reduce taxation and wipe off the National Debt, he was compelled to bring in Budgets ever increasing both. Desiring above all things to restore the French Monarchy, he was destined to see all chance of it being gradually rendered impossible. Expecting to conquer easily the forces of the Revolution, and to restore the Netherlands to Austria, he found his Continental allies false both to England and to each other; while Austria, the last to survive, was willing to give up her distant province, but anxious to aggrandise herself nearer home. With the most sincere wish to conciliate and pacify Ireland, he had contrived a project of Union with an implied promise to grant some measure of emancipation for the Catholics, only to find that the King absolutely refused to allow him to keep his word.

Now, at length, out of office, he had succeeded in procuring a peace of which the terms were violently attacked by his late colleagues, and were only supported by his opponent Fox because he thought France had thereby greatly the better of the bargain. Nor had he the satisfaction of being able to think that the peace would be a lasting one, for already Bonaparte had shown that he had no intention of staying his aggressive hand.

1802. April. Even as a private member he was to be attacked both personally and as head of the late Administration. The first debate occurred on April 12, 1802, when Sir Francis Burdett moved for an inquiry into the conduct of the late Administration, and said that it was in the variance between the avowed and the real objects of the war that their principal guilt consisted. He then endeavoured to prove that the war had not its origin in an unavoidable necessity, but "that it was sought for and provoked by his Majesty's Ministers."[1]

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxvi. p. 493.

Next he attacked the late Government for the failure of their own and their allies' attempts against France, and asked what England had gained. "Ceylon and Trinidad, a little of the plunder of her own allies. Thus terminates a war for religion, social order, and civil society! This is our indemnity for the past, and security for the future! . . . How can a peace be honourable in which every object of the war is abandoned, which leaves your enemy in a state of unexampled aggrandisement, and ends in the plunder of your own ruined allies." 1802. April.

The late Government was next abused for their action against the Northern Powers. "Against this formidable combination, with exhausted finances, famine and martial law in the land, did Ministers risk the very existence of this country upon the neutral question." Nothing escaped severe censure, their system of taxation, their restrictive acts, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and "if we turn our eyes to Ireland we shall find the despotism completed there, of which the foundations deep and broad are laid here . . . though they have failed in their attempt to conquer France, they have made a shameful conquest of the rights and liberties of England. They have flogged, tortured, and massacred the people of Ireland." Mr. Sturt seconded the motion, and Earl Temple followed, apologising for "taking notice of a speech, the most extravagant he believed that ever was uttered within those walls. A speech with more of assumption and less of profit never he believed was spoken."

Lord Belgrave then proposed an amendment that "the thanks of this House be given to his Majesty's late Ministers, for their wise and salutary conduct throughout the late war." Mr. Pitt, who would not offer a single word on the original motion, stated that he thought it better not to proceed with the amendment, which "was certainly against the general course of proceeding." The amendment was therefore withdrawn and the original motion was negatived by 246 to 39. 1802. May.

Undeterred by this result, Mr. Nicholls on May 7th brought forward a motion to thank his Majesty for having been pleased to remove Mr. Pitt from his Councils. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the misconduct and delinquency of the late Administration, "but more

1802. May. particularly the criminality of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer." This led to a long debate in which nothing new was said, and terminated in amendments in Pitt's favour being voted by 224 to 52.

But these kind of attacks were followed by one from Mr. Windham on May 13th, who, arguing in a most lucid way against the manner of dealing with Malta, pointed out that the Neapolitan soldiers could never form any security for the independence of the island. He continued, that France had never ceased her aggressive acts either before or since the preliminaries of peace, and proceeded to state that Mr. Pitt had himself taken full responsibility for the Quiberon affair. Here he was interrupted by Pitt, who submitted that he had no business to divulge State secrets, learnt when he was his Majesty's confidential servant, and stated further that the people had not been sufficiently taught that we were at war because "the French Government was such as to leave us no peace, and was necessarily in perpetual hostility with everything which as individuals and as a nation it was our interest to defend."[1] He then gave it as his opinion that the possession of Malta, the Cape of Good Hope and Cochin, was desired by the French in order to pursue their designs on India. This debate was carried on until 3 A.M., and continued on the next afternoon, but the security of Malta was not affirmed by any of the Ministers, and the arguments of Mr. Windham were left unanswered, but of course his motion was rejected by 276 to 20.

1802. June. Meanwhile Bonaparte was playing his game on the Continent with diabolical cleverness, while he received the English visitors who flocked to Paris with the greatest courtesy and charm of manner. He knew the Powers with which he had to deal exactly, and used them as pawns to check each other's rapacity while he indulged his own. He intended to strengthen Prussia against Austria at the expense of Hanover or Mecklenburg, and Bavaria was also to receive a bribe. Austria might still have resisted, but when Alexander was won over it would have been hopeless to do so, and on June 3, 1802, a secret agreement between Russia and France

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxvi. p. 749.

disposed of almost all the free cities and all the ecclesiastical territory of the Empire. 1802. June.

Within six weeks of the signing of the Definitive Treaty Pitt had serious doubts of the possibility of maintaining peace, but did not regret that he had spoken in favour of it, since he thought that a rest was necessary for England, even if only a short one.[1] Bonaparte had no intention of complying with the treaty obligations himself, but that did not prevent him professing to feel aggrieved at the action of England in not evacuating Malta, although, as we have shown above, the terms were very explicit and they had not yet been complied with. Undoubtedly it would have been better to have insisted upon holding Malta in straight plain language, but Pitt and Addington were so intent on arranging a peace that they preferred to give up the island, provided it was guaranteed against France, rather than risk breaking off the negotiations. Now, however, that they saw Bonaparte had no intention of keeping his engagements, the danger of restoring Malta became obvious, and the Ministry decided to avail themselves of the fact that no one had been authorised by the Grand Master to receive possession of the island to justify them in not removing the British troops.

The non-evacuation of Malta was the chief but by no means the only grievance; the British still occupied Alexandria, and neither expelled the emigrants from Jersey as the First Consul desired, nor refused to afford an asylum to the Princes of the House of Bourbon. Another great annoyance was the licentious abuse of the First Consul in the English Press which stigmatised him as a traitor, and accused him of murder, treason, atheism, and many other crimes and sins, of which, however unscrupulous he may have been, he was certainly not guilty. All the newspapers had joined in the attack except the *Courier*, the leading organ of the Whigs, which thought it was quite time to stop the senseless railing against him which "is only calculated to inflame the person who makes use of it, and to irritate the person against whom it is directed."[2] Of all these the

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 388.
[2] March 18, 1800.

1802. July. writings of Jean Peltier, a French royalist who had settled in London after the Peace, and started the *Ambigu* newspaper, chiefly offended the French Consul, who made repeated complaints to the Government, until at length they promised that legal proceedings should be taken against the editor. It is curious that a man of such extraordinary power and egoism, who ruled as a despot the greatest state in Europe, should have been so incensed at the writings of an obscure French journalist in London; but although it is impossible to understand what further advantages Bonaparte hoped to reap from a renewal of the war with England, his actions at this time show that he did not attempt to make or allow any compromise, but was determined to force England by a series of pin pricks to throw down the challenge. It is interesting to note that whatever may be the justice or necessity of an appeal to arms, statesmen are usually anxious that their country should not be the one to declare war, and Bonaparte was careful to endeavour to force others to appear the aggressor even in his most barefaced acts of spoliation. This point of diplomatic procedure also strongly influenced the great avenger of Germany, Prince Bismarck, who boasted that he had never recommended a declaration of war.

Newspaper abuse was by no means limited to the one side, for the *Argus*, a journal at Paris, conducted by English Republicans, was equally vituperative of the English Government; but although this organ was not in any way in connection either with the First Consul or the French nation, that was not the case with the *Moniteur*, which was a leading French newspaper under the control of Government, and which also joined in the scurrilous attack. Lord Hawkesbury, as Foreign Secretary, took no notice of these newspaper polemics; but not so Mons. Otto, who, towards the close of July, sent in a list of complaints to the Government regarding the Bourbon emigrants, the licentious Press, and other matters. Hawkesbury in reply firmly refused to alter the British laws of libel, or the custom of extending hospitality to emigrants of all nations and classes, whether princes or paupers, dethroned monarchs or disgraced statesmen, loyalists or rebels.

Undoubtedly the Duke of Orleans was anxious to obtain some military appointment, and wrote to that effect to Pitt on October 18th offering to disclose some scheme of his own for protecting Switzerland,[1] but there is no evidence that either Pitt or Addington's Government had any intention of accepting the aid of the Bourbon Princes, or of attempting another landing in France. 1802. November.

Bonaparte had already sent an army into Switzerland, and the Ministers decided to make every preparation for a renewal of hostilities. Pitt, who at this time thought he could not rely upon any help from Continental Powers, now wrote to the Prime Minister: "If this should be the case I own that on reflection I doubt very much the prudence though not at all the justice, of risking at all hazards the determination of withholding such of the restitutions as have not yet taken place."[2] This advice was taken respecting the Cape of Good Hope, which was ordered to be restored at once, but was not followed in the case of Malta. Addington and Hawkesbury indeed drew up the instructions to Lord Whitworth, who was appointed Ambassador at Paris, in clear and unequivocal language, with just the opposite meaning. He was authorised to state "His Majesty's determination never to forego his right of interfering in the affairs of the Continent on every occasion in which the interests of his own dominions or those of Europe in general, may appear to require it." He was to point out that previous to the last peace England stated that if France would not relinquish the Continental acquisitions obtained from other Powers, England would claim the right of keeping part of her conquests; that the annexation of Piedmont since the treaty made a most material difference in the permanent possession of France, and that the French had not respected the independence of the Helvetian and Batavian Republics, which they were bound to do by the most sacred engagements. He was further told not to commit his Majesty to anything regarding Malta, since the 10th Article of the treaty stipulated that some one must be chosen to receive possession of the island. But even if all arrangements were made he was not to commit his Majesty to relinquish it. "His Majesty would

[1] "Life of Pitt," vol. iii. p. 401.

[2] Ibid., p. 404.

1802. November. certainly be justified in claiming the possession of Malta as some counterpoise to the acquisitions of France since the conclusion of the Definitive Treaty."[1]

1802. December. Lord Whitworth was received with great ceremony and courtesy by the First Consul, who gave a series of entertainments to celebrate the Peace, but did not for a moment relax his preparations for further aggrandisement. The astute diplomatist, however, kept his Government well informed, and they were soon in possession of the news that the First Consul intended to attempt a second conquest of Egypt, to win over Russia to support him, and when the English evacuated Alexandria to convey a part of the Egyptian army to that city with the connivance of the Turks, and professedly to re-establish their authority.[2] On December 1st Whitworth wrote that so long as we held Malta and had a sufficient fleet in the Mediterranean we should be able to counteract the First Consul's projects, and by this time the Government had thoroughly determined to adhere to both these methods of checking Bonaparte.

At this date Fox, who was in Paris and had had several interviews with the First Consul, thought there would be no war because he was sure that Bonaparte would do everything he could to avoid it, and because he did not think the Ministry so foolish as to force him to it.[3] He considered that nothing insulting to England was meant by the German or Swiss business but would "go as far as you in thinking the Swiss business a just cause for war," but that it would only be a hypocritical pretence "and that the war, even if successful in general, would terminate in our having Malta or the Cape or Cochin, or in anything rather than Swiss liberty or independence."[4] From this we see that Fox failed to understand that the causes which were hurrying on the war were not so much that Bonaparte was continuing his aggressive acts on the Continent as that he objected to the

[1] Instructions from Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Whitworth, November 14, 1802.

[2] Whitworth to Hawkesbury, November 22nd and 27th. These Despatches have been edited and published in book form by Mr. Oscar Browning from the F. O. Records of the period. "England and Napoleon in 1803."

[3] Fox to the Earl of Lauderdale, November 18, 1802.

[4] Fox to the Hon. Charles Grey, December 1802. "Fox Correspondence," Russell, vol. iii.

retention of Malta by England as a preventive to further aggressions in the East. Not content with subduing the Continent, he had other objects in view which could not be obtained while England held an important port and possessed a fleet in the Mediterranean. It is true that none of the Continental Powers had proved by their actions that they deserved that England should make material sacrifices for their sakes, but it is obvious that it was the bounden duty of his Majesty's Ministers to protect their own country and colonies by preventing the command of important ports in the Mediterranean and elsewhere falling into the hands of the French. 1802. December.

Apart from the question of Malta it is also extremely doubtful whether Bonaparte had not a secret desire to crown his conquests by a descent on the English coasts, and if so it was absolutely necessary for him to goad the country first into war. In any case, the main point was by any means to possess Malta, or at least to ensure its evacuation by the English. The Czar, acting in all good faith, had appointed the Bailli de Ruspoli to act as Grand Master of the Order of St. John, but he had refused the appointment, and was then given to understand that unless he accepted it "he must expect to feel the utmost weight of the arrogance of the First Consul."[1] Indeed the anxiety of Bonaparte to force the English out of the Mediterranean was marked throughout his every action at this period, and in this he was backed by Marcoff, the Russian Minister, who used every endeavour to persuade his Court to undertake the guarantee of Malta.

The extraordinary persistency of Ambassadors, spies, and other informants in representing the dissatisfaction of the French nation with its Government, and the doleful state of its finances, from time to time, during the whole of the war, is almost humorous, and well illustrates that the wish is often father to the thought; nor was Whitworth any exception to the general rule,[2] but by this time the Govern-

[1] Whitworth to Hawkesbury, December 5, 1802.

[2] "Amongst all the Powers of Europe no such auxiliary can be formed as those we possess in the very heart of this country—the disaffection, I might say the contempt, of the nation for his Government, and the total derangement of his finances," December 20, 1802.

1802. December. ment must have become rather sceptical of such opinions. But if the inductions of the agents of England have been proved by the course of events to have been usually wrong, their information was, on the other hand, usually right. Thus, although Whitworth's despatches show he was particularly anxious to prove that France had aggressive designs on the British dominions, his information is singularly accurate, and the intentions of the First Consul to subdue St. Domingo by a force of 30,000 men, and to strengthen himself in Louisiana and the Floridas, which were to be ceded by Spain, were at once made known to the Government.[1] Other Powers were now growing suspicious, and in spite of the efforts of Bonaparte to conciliate Russia, Count Woronzow, the Chancellor, was not in favour of France, and Marcoff strongly objected when the island of Elba was annexed to the Republic, since he wished it should belong to the King of Sardinia. In England the New Parliament had met on November 16th, and on the 23rd the King delivered his Speech in person, remarking that he could not be indifferent to any material change in the relative condition and strength of foreign states, and that therefore some means of security were necessary.

Lord Grenville again attacked the Ministry, stating that the only hope of salvation was by a strong system of defence by measures of decision and firmness, "not by any of the men now in power, but by him to whom this country, to whom Europe looks up at this awful hour for the preservation of their dearest rights and liberties."[2] This wish for the return to power of Pitt was shared by several of the members in the House of Commons, who had lost all faith in the administration of Addington, and appeared not to know that Pitt was as responsible for the extensive restitutions of England's conquests as any one else. Fox supported the Government against Pitt, but maintained that there was no reason to keep a larger military establishment than usual in peace times. Sheridan, on the other hand, in a clever witty speech, supported the Government proposal for 50,000 seamen, nearly double the usual number in peace. He was

[1] Despatches in December 1802 and January 1803.
[2] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxvi. p. 945.

followed by Canning, who eulogised Pitt as the one great commanding spirit who could cope with the genius of Bonaparte. 1802. December.

At this time the ex-Minister was at Bath, undergoing a water cure, and all his friends were constantly urging him to step forward and take his old place as Head of the Government, but he felt both that he needed rest and that the time was not yet ripe for him to replace Addington. One or two small matters greatly annoyed him, and probably strengthened this determination to a certain extent. His old colleague Dundas accepted a peerage, becoming Lord Melville without even informing him, and the *Times* was bitterly hostile and in favour of Addington. But he was chiefly dissatisfied with the Budget proposals of the Government, which violated all his principles; there was announced a loan of ten millions, although he had repeatedly told Addington it was indispensably necessary to provide at once for all extraordinary expenses incurred in times of peace, with which opinion the Prime Minister had stated he thoroughly agreed.

Pitt was still in favour of peace because of the effect on the revenue, and thought that nothing should supersede that consideration except a gross national insult or an open act of hostility. On January 5, 1803, he went to stay for the night with Mr. Addington, who, during the next day, told him that even if Lord Grenville had not stated it was absolutely essential for him to return to office, he should have been disposed himself to propose it. No further steps were taken, and Pitt, although convinced that the Government had made a serious financial error in the estimates and in their mode of raising the revenue, still refrained from attending the House and risking embarrassing or even perhaps overthrowing them at such a critical moment. Two events now occurred which brought matters to a crisis between England and France. On January 13th the *Moniteur* published a paper by Colonel Sebastiani on Egypt, in which he stated that the Turks were completely defeated, and that the whole country was in the hands of the Mamelukes. The object of this publication was to afford an excuse to Bonaparte for offering his assistance 1803. January.

1803. January. to the Porte and so regaining a footing in Egypt.[1] A fortnight after this Bonaparte demanded to know the intention of England regarding Malta, but although Whitworth had already confided to the Spanish Ambassador the intention of his Court, he did not consider it advisable yet to state it to the First Consul. In order to allay suspicion Talleyrand then endeavoured to persuade the English Minister that Colonel Sebastiani's mission was a commercial one, but Bonaparte openly stated that it was a political measure rendered necessary by the British occupation of Malta. This attitude of the French Government caused a strong remonstrance from Count Marcoff, who stated that the Emperor of Russia intended to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire by every means in his power,[2] and at the same time the Porte was determined to support its vassal, and oppose the re-occupation of Egypt by the First Consul. It was now time for the British Government to state its intentions firmly, and Whitworth at length informed Talleyrand that the King intended to hold Malta because he could not trust the action of the French in Egypt, but that, according to the terms of the Treaty, the English troops had now left the latter country. This decision threw Bonaparte into a condition of great fury, and he abused the Government, railed against the scurrility of the Press, and was greatly disturbed when he heard the House of Commons had voted 10,000 more

1803. March. seamen. On March 14th he lost his temper at a public audience, and turning to Whitworth, said, "Nous avons déjà fait la guerre pendant quinze ans. Mais vous voulez la faire encore quinze ans et vous m'y forcez," to which the diplomatist merely replied that such was far from his Majesty's intention. This tone of injured innocence was obviously assumed to influence the public, for the First Consul proceeded actively with his preparations. Camps were ordered at Breda, Dunkirk, Bayonne, and Verona, and a small fleet of four ships was ordered to India. On this side of the Channel the militia were called out, and every one was waiting for the inevitable rupture.

[1] From Whitworth, January 27, 1803.
[2] Ibid., February 28, 1803.

Addington was now very anxious for the return of Pitt to power, but there were insuperable difficulties in the way. Many attempts were made to compromise matters, and Lord Melville submitted a suggestion of the Prime Minister that neither he nor Pitt should be at the head of the Government, but that Lord Chatham should hold that office although Pitt would really exert the power. To this proposal Pitt resolutely refused to agree. Next, Lord Grenville stated that neither he, Windham, nor Lord Spencer would sit in the same Cabinet with Addington or Lord Hawkesbury, and Pitt then proposed that the Prime Minister should accept a peerage and become Speaker of the House of Lords. This idea was negatived by the Cabinet, and it is said was also disapproved by the King.[1] 1803 March.

The conduct of Pitt at this epoch proves conclusively that his one idea was to return to power under any circumstances, and with his old colleagues if possible. He had certainly used his influence to cause the Government to agree to the terms of peace, which were violently opposed by Grenville and his friends; he had advocated the restitution of most of our conquests but was now in favour of retaining Malta, and was thus in close agreement with Addington's Government. He was, however, greatly opposed to their system of finance, but this was a minor point compared with the peace of Europe; and yet he was persuaded by Grenville not to return as head of the Government unless Addington and Hawkesbury were removed, and his late colleagues but opponents in the peace arrangements should have their places. On the other hand, Addington naturally wished to exclude those who had opposed the peace, and even now hoped that some arrangement might be made with Bonaparte if the war-like party were not in power. That he was straining every nerve to prevent the outbreak of hostilities is proved by the fact that Hawkesbury was instructed to propose an arrangement by which England should retain Malta, but permit France to acquire Elba, and acknowledge the Italian and Ligurian Republics, provided an arrangement should be made in Italy for the King of Sardinia, satisfactory to him. Since the re-

[1] "Life of Pitt," vol. iv. p. 37.

1803. March. lationship between the Prime Minister and Pitt was now considerably strained, the whole credit and responsibility for the negotiations at this date must rest upon the Cabinet alone. The Republic were still suspicious of the intentions of England concerning the Cape of Good Hope, but Whitworth assured Talleyrand that orders for its evacuation were given on November 20, 1802, and that therefore the settlement was by this time no doubt in the hands of the Batavian Republic. As Bonaparte still steadily refused to agree to the retention of Malta, Addington next suggested holding it only for a certain number of years, to which the First Consul also refused to agree, although he did not object to England occupying Lampedusa or any other island between Malta and the mainland. This proposal Whitworth refused, and delivered an ultimatum, verbally, demanding that England should retain Malta for ten years, that Lampedusa should be ceded to her by the King of Naples without opposition on the part of the French, and that if Holland should be evacuated by the French troops and some arrangement made in favour of Switzerland and the King of Sardinia, England would acknowledge the new Italian States.

1803. May. On May 12th a council of seven persons was held at St. Cloud, of whom Joseph Bonaparte and Talleyrand were the only two who voted for peace. The next and last step was taken by France, who now asked what England would do if the French opened negotiations with the Court of Naples for the possession of Otranto, on the same terms that England acquired Lampedusa. This proposal was made with the ostensible purpose of soothing the vanity of the First Consul. Whitworth refused to discuss the question and left Paris on May 12th.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion, after reading the history of this period as written in the Records, in the various biographies and in the work of M. Thiers, that both the Powers were so suspicious of each other, that apart from the questions of French aggressions and the retention of Malta by the English, it would have been impossible to maintain peace for any length of time, while France was ruled by Bonaparte. Whitworth was anxious to obey his

orders to the letter and was unwilling to delay the fulfilment of them, while the First Consul, accustomed to act as an absolute autocrat, resented the firm dictatorial tone of the English Ambassador. Talleyrand was undoubtedly in favour of peace, and thought that the First Consul would have "made a present of Malta" to England, if the Cabinet had treated him with more regard. On May 18th England declared war, and the diplomatic papers were laid on the tables in both Houses. A counter Declaration of War was issued on the part of France, and the First Consul then took a step for which he was never forgiven, and which roused against him that firm sturdy determination that has always been a characteristic of the English nation, and which causes it to persevere steadily in any design or adventure in which its Government contrives to launch it. He issued a Decree on May 22nd ordering the arrest of all British subjects travelling in France, and many unoffending English people were detained in prison for the rest of the war. The justification for this unusual and illegal step was that two French vessels had been captured by the English in the Bay of Audierne in Brittany on the 20th of the month. On this point Hawkesbury wrote strongly remonstrating.[1] 1803. May.

Now that war had been declared Pitt felt it to be his duty to return to the House. His bitterest opponent could not saddle him with responsibility for the rupture, but that he thoroughly approved of the action of the Government is shown by his speech of May 23rd, which was one of the greatest he ever made. Unfortunately the public curiosity was so great that the strangers' gallery was filled at an unusually early hour, and none of the Parliamentary reporters could gain admission. The result is that only an imperfect sketch of the discussion has been preserved. Lord Hawkesbury opened, and after a statement recapitulating the story

[1] Hawkesbury to Talleyrand: "His Majesty is astonished at the action of the French Government in arresting all the subjects of hostile states, whether in arms or not, and states that it is contrary to the usage of European States; but that the same general usage has always admitted the exercise of the rights of belligerents to detain and make prisoners the subjects of each other, who are occupied upon the seas, and who are not merely passing thereon." June 15, 1803.

1803. May. of the negotiations, moved an address of thanks to his Majesty for laying the several papers before the House, and approving of the justice of the war. Mr. Pitt argued that the aggressions of France and "the whole of Sebastiani's report, and the circumstances of his mission to Egypt, the express and deliberate avowal of Bonaparte himself of his views and intentions in a formal conference with Lord Whitworth, and the information of the same intentions through the official channel of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, afforded the most indisputable evidence that the First Consul had formed the determination, even while Malta was yet in our hands, of resuming his hostile project against Egypt; that the pursuit of such a project was an undeniable act of hostility against this country, and aimed at some of its most important interests; that it was besides a direct violation both of the letter and spirit of the treaty of Amiens itself, under pretence of which treaty alone our evacuation of the island was demanded, though under circumstances which in other respects, according to the letter of that treaty, did not authorise such a demand; that the disclosure of this hostile project clearly justified this country in requiring fresh security against it, and if such security was refused, in having recourse to arms for that purpose at the moment which appeared to be most for our advantage."[1] From this it is clear that Pitt considered the Government were both morally and legally, according to the terms of the treaty, justified in not evacuating Malta.

On the following day Fox rose and argued that the Ministers had not been anxious and uniform to preserve peace. The address pledged the House of Commons to the justice and necessity of the war "for want of due satisfaction from the First Consul of France," without its having been shown in what points satisfaction had been demanded and refused. He then argued that every act of aggression which France had been guilty of since the Peace of Amiens could not fairly be adduced with reference to its effect upon ourselves as constituting a just ground for war. "He denied that Malta was worth a war for itself; he denied that Malta was worth it as essential to the security of Egypt; he denied

[1] "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxvi. p. 1388.

that Egypt was essential to the security of India; he denied that our Indian possessions, with all their vast importance, which he knew and acknowledged as much as any man, were essential to the vital interests of Great Britain." On each of these points he argued at great length in order to prove that the war was for Malta, "plain Malta," and that it was not worth fighting for. Mr. Windham in reply violently attacked Fox for "supporting selfishness against patriotism, and opposing private considerations to the grand view of national policy." On the division the motion was carried by 398 to 67 votes. 1803. May.

A few days later Fox rose to make a motion advocating the acceptance of the mediation of Russia between England and France. Lord Hawkesbury argued against the House interposing its advice on any branch of the royal prerogative, but assured it that the Government was ready to accept the mediation of Russia, on which Fox withdrew his motion. The Government was now supported in the country by the Press, and the people cheerfully acquiesced in the increased taxation rendered necessary by the renewal of hostilities.

CHAPTER XVII

The French invade Hanover—Vacillating policy of the King of Prussia—Offers to mediate if England relinquishes Malta—Preparations for the invasion of England—The Volunteer movement—Pitt and Addington completely estranged—A war of Pamphlets—Nelson takes command in the Mediterranean—Reconquest of restored Colonies—Evolution of party politics—Government becoming unpopular—Country clamouring for Pitt—King again ill—Politics of the Prince of Wales—Pitt writes to the King—Addington resigns—The new Cabinet—The King refuses to admit Fox—Bonaparte assumes the purple—Plan to invade England frustrated by the death of Treville—Spain declares war.

1803. June. On the outbreak of hostilities, Bonaparte's first step was to send a force of twenty-five thousand men under General Mortier to hold and occupy Hanover as part of the dominions of his enemy the King of England. This step was communicated officially by Talleyrand to Hawkesbury, who at once remonstrated on the ground that the position of George III. as Elector of Hanover was distinct from that of King of England.[1] Hanover was part of the German Empire, and was under the guardianship of the King of Prussia, who was now placed in a most difficult position. Friedrich William III., who had succeeded in 1797, had a strong desire to keep his country out of the quarrel, and was particularly nervous of the forces of Bonaparte. On the other hand, the occupation of Hanover brought the troops of the Republic on to his own doorstep. The King was really his own Foreign Secretary, although that post was nominally held by Count

[1] Talleyrand stated that the French army occupied Hanover, and that the English army would be exchanged for the soldiers and sailors which the vessels of England have made or will make prisoners. June 10, 1803. Hawkesbury replied that the King had always considered his character of Elector of Hanover as separate from that of King of England, and that that principle had always been recognised by France. Under such circumstances he intended to appeal to the Empire, and those Powers of Europe who had guaranteed the Germanic Constitution, and therefore his rights and possessions as Elector of Hanover. June 18, 1803. On June 9th Bonaparte wrote to Mortier, stating that he hoped the King of England would agree to the exchange of his soldiers, but that if he would not, "nous serions obligés de prendre d'autres mésures." — *Correspondance de Napoléon*, vol. viii. p. 350.

Haugwitz, who, however, had little influence over and rarely even saw his royal master. It was the custom of the King to be advised by officials called Secretaries of Council, who were neither Ministers nor heads of departments. The latter, indeed, never met as a Cabinet, and rarely had interviews with the King. 1803. June.

This system led to the most absurd complications, for the Foreign Minister often had to voice a policy without first being consulted, and whether or not he approved of it. The Secretaries of Council were only anxious to propitiate the French and, instead of objecting to the violation of the territory of a neutral, suggested that if England would evacuate Malta, the King would offer his mediation. When this was absolutely rejected Prussia next offered to bribe Bonaparte with a sum of money, raised in Hanover, to desist from his project. While these miserable suggestions were being mooted and rejected, the army of Mortier had taken possession of the country which offered practically no resistance. The Duke of Cambridge, with other officers of the Hanoverian army, being disgusted with the conduct of the civil power, soon resigned their commissions and proceeded to England to offer their services in her army. Thus was Hanover occupied by the French, and for two years felt the full weight of the tyranny of her oppressors. Bonaparte, not satisfied with this, next despatched a force to the mouth of the Elbe to stop the trade of Great Britain with Prussia.[1] Addington's Government at once retaliated by informing the Court of Berlin that it would blockade the Elbe and Weser against all countries unless the French were withdrawn. Prussia was now between the devil and the deep sea, and learnt that a passive policy of non-resistance does not always succeed when surrounded by active Powers.[2] Anxious to propitiate

[1] Bonaparte's instructions to General Mortier are very explicit on this point. He was not to permit "l'introduction de malles, courriers marchandises anglaises dans le pays que vous occupez, ni dans l'Elbe et le Weser."—*Correspondance*, vol. viii. p. 398.

[2] Menzel states: "Austria acted, undeniably, on this occasion with impolitic haste; she ought rather to have waited until Prussia and public opinion throughout Germany had been ranged on her side, as sooner or later must have been the case by the brutal encroachments of Napoleon."—Menzel's "History of Germany," vol. iii. p. 230.

1803. June. the Power which at present had the upper hand, one of the Council Secretaries, Lombard by name, was at once despatched to Bonaparte to demand that Prussia's interests should not suffer, but the First Consul easily overcame the mind of the King's emissary, and sent him back full of eulogies for the ruler of France but with no concession or promise whatever.

In order to raise money for his next great scheme Bonaparte had ceded Louisiana to the United States, receiving fifty-four millions of francs in part payment. He also drew large sums from Spain and the Republic of Italy, but chiefly relied upon the military ardour of France. The project which now absorbed all his energies was the invasion of England. A hundred thousand men were assembled along the heights of Boulogne, and fifty thousand more were spread along the coast from Brest to Antwerp. The warriors of Egypt, Italy, and Germany were drawn together for this great enterprise, of whom a few were destined for Ireland, but the main army was to be led to London by Bonaparte himself. To convey this vast force across the Channel, and as far as possible to escape the English fleet, an immense number of flat-bottomed boats were built, capable of carrying horses and artillery as well as infantry. It was estimated that over two thousand would be required, but that by the autumn all would be completed and ready.

1803. September. On this side of the Channel preparations were at once made to repel the invaders, if possible, before they could effect a landing, but if not to confront them with a powerful army and an enormous number of volunteers who pressed forward from all classes to be enrolled. The blood of the nation leapt in its veins, men who could not have tolerated a garrison life during peace, were enthusiastic soldiers when real work was to be done. True patriots clamoured for a weapon to defend their fatherland. To learn to shoot straight appeared more desirous than to salute; to defeat the enemy more important than to march in a line like a wall. Invasion was threatened, it was a point of honour for every able-bodied man to offer his services. So it happened in 1803, that the difficulty was not so much to raise corps of suitable men as to determine the most fit from the numbers who applied.

By the end of the summer upwards of 300,000[1] had been enrolled, and were busy learning to shoot straight, and such portions of drill as are necessary in actual fighting. 1803. September.

The war-like instincts of the people were stimulated by the rhetoric both of the pulpit and the stage, but the spirit of patriotism among many merely showed itself in violent abuse of the enemy, especially Bonaparte, who was accused of every imaginable crime, caricatured and burnt in effigy. The fear of invasion was undoubtedly great, and the people of Essex and along the South Coast in many places prepared to migrate with all their portable property at a moment's notice, but nothing approaching a general panic occurred.[2]

The people indeed responded nobly to the beat of the drum, but the management of the volunteer movement was severely criticised in Parliament. On December 9th and 12th the army estimates were brought forward, and Mr. Windham attacked the Government because the whole of their attention was devoted to the volunteers and militia, while the notion of a regular army seemed to have escaped their minds. Fox pointed out that it was useless teaching volunteers their drill if there were no weapons for them to learn to manipulate. Pitt supported the movement in an able speech, but criticised the Government for not fixing the proportion between the volunteers and the regulars at a greater number, especially in the counties on the coast. He suggested that they ought to be assembled and drilled in large bodies, and that every battalion should have a field officer and an adjutant from the army to assist in the instruction and discipline of the corps. Both Addington and Yorke (Secretary of State at War) concurred in this suggestion, but were afraid that it would be impossible to procure enough field officers from the line. 1803. December.

A practical point was settled as to the exemption of the

[1] From Addington to the Marquis Wellesley, September 9, 1803: "The number of regulars, militia, and army of reserve in Great Britain will amount by the end of this month (when the latter will be completed) to 140,000 men; and of volunteers, whose services have been accepted, to upwards of 300,000, and they might be increased to any amount."—"Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 226.

[2] Thiers' statement that the idea of an invasion led by Bonaparte caused "un frisson de terreur dans toutes les classes de la nation," is a manifest exaggeration.—*Consulat et l'Empire*, vol. iv. p. 504.

1803. December. volunteers on December 10th of this year. Mr. Yorke stated that he proposed to bring in a Bill stipulating that in order to obtain exemption from the liability to serve in the militia or any other reserve force which might be formed, each volunteer would have to attend twenty-four days in the year if an infantryman, and twelve days if a cavalry man.[1]

1803. Mr. Pitt, the Warden of the Cinque Ports, was indefatigable in raising volunteers, of whom he was a Lieutenant-Colonel, and in inspecting fortifications and harbours, but was still holding entirely aloof from any discussion with the Government. The feud between him and Addington indeed was complete, and the friends of each, by their zeal for their respective leaders, only increased the estrangement. Many pamphlets were written by both sides, of which the most important was one entitled "Cursory Remarks upon the State of Parties by a Near Observer." In this Pitt was violently abused and accused both of timidity in retiring from office, and arrogance in wishing to return to it. The facts stated clearly showed that the author was some one in the confidence of the Government, and both Pitt and his friends believed that Addington was responsible for it. The Prime Minister, however, denied any knowledge of the production until after its publication, and there is no doubt that his friends had acted without consulting him. Pitt considered that the pamphlet ought to be answered, and consulted Mr. Rose and Mr. Long on the point, the result being the appearance of a counter pamphlet entitled "Plain Answer to the Misrepresentations and Calumnies contained in the Cursory Remarks of a Near Observer, by a more Accurate Observer." The only remark in it of historical importance is, that neither Mr. Pitt nor Lord Grenville ever gave, nor did Mr. Addington ever understand that he had received, a promise of constant support from the ex-Minister.[2]

Immediately on the outbreak of hostilities Nelson hoisted his flag on the *Victory*, and proceeded to the Mediterranean as Commander-in-Chief, with instructions to sail to Malta and arrange with Sir Alexander Ball, who was still the Commissioner of the island, what steps should be taken

[1] "Parliamentary Debate," vol. i. p. 1765. Statutes, 44 George III. c. 54.
[2] "Life of Pitt," vol. iv. p. 93.

to ensure its protection and safety. He was next to proceed to Toulon in order to take, sink, or burn any French ships, and to protect Genoa, Leghorn, and other parts of the Italian coast from the French. He was also to watch the Court of Spain, and while not obstructing them as neutrals, to prevent their joining the French fleet or entering a French port.[1] 1803.

Nelson by this time had altered his mind on the question of the value of Malta, and decided that it ought never to be given up. In October he proceeded to blockade Genoa and Spezia, but still kept a ship at Naples, as the city had not settled down and there was constant alarm there. The Spaniards were now very unfriendly, and the Admiral expected war at any moment, but the Spanish Court was not yet ready to throw off the mask. At the beginning of 1804 Nelson strongly advised the Government that Sardinia[2] ought to be taken, on the ground that the King could not hold it against the French, and that if it fell into the hands of the Republic England should be cut off from Naples, except by a circuitous route. Meanwhile the French fleet steadily remained in Toulon, and the naval operations of the belligerents were limited to seizing merchant ships. This led to a great deal of complaint on both sides, for the privateers of the enemy frequently attacked the British commerce and then sheltered in neutral ports, and the French, on the other hand, complained that the British ships frequently broke the neutrality of such ports. 1804. January to March.

No great naval engagement was fought at this time, but the Colonies which had been restored at the Peace were again easily taken. On June 22nd Saint Lucie was captured after some resistance, and a few days afterwards Tobago again became a British possession. Before the end of September the Dutch Colonies of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice had also changed masters. During these months at St. Domingo a squadron of ships, which had sailed from Port 1804. March to June.

[1] Nicolas, "Nelson Despatches," vol. v. pp. 68–70.

[2] "Sardinia will be in the hands of the French either by compact, exchange, or insurrection. It is the *summum bonum* of everything which is valuable for us in the Mediterranean. The more I know of it, the more I am convinced of its inestimable value, from position, Naval Port, and resources of all kinds." —Nelson to Lord Hobart, March 17, 1804. "Despatches," vol. v. p. 449.

1804. March to June. Royal, had co-operated with the coloured insurgents to free the island from the few French still remaining, and in October the only ports left to France were Cape François and the mole of St. Nicolas. The former was evacuated in November and the latter in December 1803.[1]

In order to take possession of Pondicherry, according to the terms of the treaty, a French officer was sent from Brest in the *Belle Poule*, but the ship did not arrive until June 16th, and no steps being taken to restore the factories before the news of the outbreak of war arrived in India in August, Pondicherry was never given back to France.

The British tars were indeed fighting with their customary courage and skill, and the First Lord of the Admiralty will ever live in history as a gallant Admiral, but he was not a good administrator, and a still worse politician and orator, as has usually been the case with most great soldiers and sailors. This gave an opportunity to Pitt, who on March 15th brought forward a motion requesting papers relating to the navy, which was in reality intended to lead to a debate on the conduct of Lord St. Vincent as its head, and thus was a direct attack on the Administration. The debate in itself is chiefly of interest as showing the state of parties at this date. Tierney, as Treasurer of the Navy, defended his chief, and Addington also spoke during the evening. Sheridan resisted the motion and violently attacked Pitt. Fox supported on the ground that an inquiry would be for the advantage of his noble friend, and prove him in every respect a contrast to the rest of the Cabinet. On the division the Ayes were 130 and the Noes 201, showing a majority for the Government of only 71, which clearly indicated their growing unpopularity.[2]

1804. The evolution of the parties was proceeding on curious lines. The war-like Grenvilles and Windham had joined with Fox, the ardent supporter of peace, and this powerful combination steadily attacked the Government, whether it was supported or opposed by Pitt, who maintained an absolutely free hand. The ex-Minister indeed had at this time no party, and refused to combine with any for the

[1] James' "Naval History," vol. iii. p. 209.
[2] "Parliamentary Debates," vol. i. p. 927.

sole purpose of harassing and opposing the Government, 1804.
but for this very reason he was the more powerful, his occasional attacks being the more effectual as coming from one who was apparently anxious to lend the Administration his aid, whenever he conscientiously could do so. In reality he was now prepared to replace Addington at any time, and either to form a purely Tory Administration, retaining some of the present Cabinet, or to coalesce with Fox, who was bitterly opposed to Addington's Government on all occasions. The general opinion of the House of Commons was undoubtedly in favour of Pitt's return as soon as possible, not only because Addington himself and most of his Cabinet were indifferent debaters, and consequently little able to explain their own actions in the most favourable light, but because the Tory party really consisted of the followers of Pitt, although, on his resignation, its members had considered it their duty to support his successor, and still did so, on the principle that Addington was the Minister entrusted by the King with the direction of affairs.

It is necessary in order to comprehend the subsequent course of events to bear in mind two important factors acting at this period. The first was the enormous influence and power of the King, not so much to govern as he pleased, but to thwart anything against his wishes. Pitt had resigned because George III. had prevented him granting some measure of emancipation to the Catholics, and had been succeeded by a Minister nominated by the King in reality, and not because he was the recognised leader of the party possessing a majority of votes. Indeed, as the ex-Speaker, he ought to have had but little bias for either side, and certainly it is difficult now to state whether his principles were more Tory or Whig. But, as the King's Minister, the Tory party considered it their duty to support him, until he felt it to be his duty to resign.

The second factor, which, unlike the first, is still one of the chief forces in politics, was the tendency for a party to become associated with one name, and at this date that name was Pitt. The constituencies which really elected members, and were not merely nomination boroughs, voted for the Tories as supporters of Pitt, who had for nearly

1804. twenty years been at the head of affairs, and therefore inspired the confidence which in England is always given to a man of considerable practical experience, whether his policy has been successful or not. Although, therefore, in the cold light of reasoning from despatches, speeches, and correspondence written or delivered a hundred years ago, Addington's Government do not seem to have really committed any egregious blunders, yet when they were assailed by the most brilliant orators of the day in speeches sparkling with wit, sarcasm, and invective, and were unable to reply in the same style, the House of Commons and the country began to look for the return of their old leader, and to lose confidence in their present head. Before any change could take place it was very necessary to consult the Prince of Wales, and to discover his wishes on the subject, since the King was again suffering from an attack of his mental malady, and it might be necessary to appoint a Regency at any moment.

The Prince had but little knowledge of politics, and no well-marked principles, but he had chiefly associated with Fox, whose private life was more in conformity with his own than the more austere existence of Pitt. His political predilections were entirely governed by his personal friendships, nor did he hesitate to discuss most important affairs of State with his numerous lady friends.[1] Lord Moira, the Commander of the Forces in Scotland, was at this particular time first favourite with the Prince, who proposed, if he became Regent, to make him Prime Minister, but that nobleman had enough common sense to persuade him that it was essential to call in the aid of Pitt and Lord Melville to form an Administration. The Prince at first demurred to this, because he wished that Fox and Grey should be in the Cabinet, and did not think that Pitt would act with them, but eventually consented to endeavour to form the broadest Administration possible, and commissioned Lord Moira to communicate with Pitt on the subject. This was accordingly done through the medium of Mr. Charles Hope, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, to whom Pitt replied that he did not think the King was as ill as the Prince believed,

[1] Percy Fitzgerald's "Life of George IV.," vol. i.

that he did not wish to establish any connection which might preclude the King from forming any Administration he wished on his recovery, and that if his Majesty preferred it, he would be prepared to form a Government without Fox or Grenville. 1804.

Pitt's former colleague, Lord Melville, was also urging him again to take the lead, but agreed that the actual state of the negotiation should be explained to Lord Grenville and Fox. On April 16th both Pitt and Fox opposed the third reading of the Bill for the augmentation of the Irish Militia, and the Government majority was reduced to 21. This decided Addington, and he sent a message asking Pitt to state, through a mutual friend, his opinion on public affairs, and the steps necessary to be taken. Pitt replied that he could not make any such statement to Mr. Addington, but that if the King wished him to give his opinion to any person by whom he could communicate, he would state for his Majesty's information his unreserved opinion as to the steps which ought to be taken to form a new Government. Addington acquiesced in this decision, and advised his Majesty to commission the Chancellor to see Mr. Pitt and to receive from him his communication. This was told to Fox by Pitt, who promised to use his utmost endeavours to persuade the King to authorise him to form a coalition Government.[1] On April 19th a motion respecting certain papers relating to the war in India was brought by the Earl of Carlisle in the House of Lords, and the Ministers were defeated by one vote. On the 23rd Fox brought on a motion in the House of Commons, and the majority for the Ministers was 52; two days afterwards on the Army of Reserve Suspension Bill the number had fallen to 37, and Addington sought an audience of the King and resigned on the 26th. Meanwhile on the 27th a letter written by Pitt on the 21st was conveyed by Eldon to the King in which, without stating any particular case, he laments "the want of any vigorous and well-considered system on the part of Ministers, adapted to the new and critical state of affairs," and thinks that "while the Administration remains 1804. April.

[1] Letter from Lord Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham, April 19, 1804. Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iv. p. 150.

1804. April. in its present shape, and particularly under the direction of the person now holding the chief place in it, every attempt to provide adequately and effectually for the public defence, and for meeting the extraordinary and unprecedented efforts of the enemy, will be fruitless."[1]

Now, although this letter was written before Addington had decided to resign,[2] Pitt seems to have considered that he was merely acting according to the arrangement agreed upon beforehand with him, but, as it contained such strictures on the Government, he sent it open to Lord Eldon, who did not as a matter of fact deliver it until the 27th, the day after Addington had acquainted the King with his intention of withdrawing from office, although the Cabinet did not officially resolve to resign until Sunday the 29th. Next day the Chancellor called on Pitt to inform him that Addington intended to resign, and of his Majesty's desire to receive from him in writing the plan of a new Administration.

Pitt accordingly suggested that Fox and Grenville should be asked to join the new Government. The King at first very harshly refused to consider either of their names, but after an interview of three hours' duration at length was persuaded to admit the Grenvilles and even Fox's friends, but not Fox himself. Pitt was thus baffled in his wish to form a coalition Government, but was quite satisfied and even surprised with the King's mental condition.

1804. May. When his Majesty's decision became known, a meeting of the Opposition was held, and it was agreed that neither Lord Grenville, Windham, or Lord Spencer would take part in a Government from which Fox was excluded.[3] Pitt was therefore obliged to continue six of the members of the Cabinet in their places, Lord Eldon as Chancellor, the Duke of Portland as President of the Council, the Earl of Westmoreland as Privy Seal, the Earl of Chatham as Master of

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iv., Appendix, p. 1.

[2] Addington was fully resolved to stand his ground "until after the diminished majority of the 25th." "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii. p. 278.

[3] Grenville to Pitt, May 8, 1804. Russell, "Fox's Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 54. "On every other question but the admission of Fox into the Cabinet Pitt found the King very reasonable and tractable."—Jesse's "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii. p. 364.

the Ordnance, and Lord Castlereagh as President of the Board of Control. Lord Hawkesbury also remained as a Secretary of State, but was transferred from the Foreign to the Home Office, the new Foreign Secretary being Lord Harrowby. Lord Melville became First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl Camden Secretary for War and Colonies, Lord Mulgrave Chancellor of the Duchy, and the Duke of Montrose President of the Board. Of these twelve persons only Pitt and Castlereagh were in the House of Commons. Outside the Cabinet the only appointment of interest was that of Canning, who became Treasurer of the Navy, but he also greatly lamented the exclusion of Fox and the Grenvilles from the public service. The mental condition of the King still continued to be a source of anxiety,[1] but when he found the Administration was formed according to his wishes he was soothed and calmed, and soon recovered his old feeling of friendship for the new Prime Minister. He was indeed sensible and reasonable with his Minister, but was harsh and capricious with his family and household, making ridiculous changes among his servants without the least pretext. 1804. May.

If the sins of Addington's Administration had not been remarkable either in commission or in omission, it is certain that the restoration of Pitt to power created far more confidence in the English Government among the Powers of the Continent, and roused their hopes that some vigorous steps would soon be taken against the French. 1804. March.

The actions of Bonaparte were now such as could not fail to arouse the indignant hate of the whole civilised world. No rank was too high for his ambition, no means of attaining it too difficult or too immoral, no crime too great if it tended to this end. His councillors feared to speak, the country worshipped its master and hated his enemies. France was now Bonaparte, but Bonaparte was not France. The First Consul ruled a mighty country, he carried its armies victorious into neighbouring territory, he forced the principles of the Republic at the point of the sword upon people half

[1] The Duke of York wrote to the Chancellor on May 26th that the King's notions regarding foreign politics "could only be creatures of an imagination heated and disordered."—Jesse's "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii. p. 377.

1804. March. fearful to accept but powerless to refuse them; but he was not working for France, nor the republican principles, nor against the divine right of princes, nor against corrupt governments, but entirely and solely for the one person Bonaparte.

The next step was to be one of rank only for himself and his family, since he already held absolute power, and with this object the First Consul decided to found a new dynasty and become Emperor of the French. The sympathies of the people were first roused by the exposure of a plot against his life.[1] General Pichegru, the conqueror of Holland, and a Breton gentleman named Georges Cadoudal, were arrested and thrown into prison. Moreau, a true republican soldier, was kept under arrest, and all those officers who did not subscribe to the invitation to Bonaparte to assume the crown were loaded with official calumny, and removed from their commands. Pichegru died suddenly in prison, and it seems probable that he committed suicide, but suspicions were aroused that he had been murdered. This opinion greatly incensed Bonaparte, but was almost justified by his treatment of the Duc d'Enghien.

Fearful for his own downfall his wrath was directed against the dynasty of his predecessors, and he endeavoured by every means to entice the Count of Artois and the other Bourbon princes from England. Having failed to persuade the British Government to refuse an asylum to these royal refugees when at peace, he endeavoured to lure them to Paris now that war had recommenced. These efforts were fruitless, for the exiled House preferred to shelter behind the British fleet. Where only land intervened there was no safety, and in Baden, twelve miles from the French frontier, the Duke of Enghien, a harmless dependent on England, was arrested by a troop of French soldiers on March 15, 1804.[2] He was removed to Paris and sentenced to death by a commission of six colonels, who did not even keep up the pretence

[1] Mr. Holland Rose has discovered evidence that "some at least of our Admiralty officials also aided Cadoudal."—"Life of Napoleon I.," vol. i. p. 451.

[2] "Personne n'osait le contredire; le consul Lebrun se taisait; le consul Cambacérès se taisait ainsi, en laissant voir pourtant cette désapprobation silencieuse, qui était sa résistance à certaines actes du Premier Consul." —Thiers' *Histoire Consulat et l'Empire*, vol. iv. p. 585.

of a trial by hearing any evidence. On the 21st he was shot.[1] 1804. March.
This cruel murder at length opened the eyes of all those outside France who had previously been fascinated by the French ruler. Alexander, who was slowly awakening to the fact that he had been only used as an instrument for the further aggrandisement of Bonaparte, ordered his Court to put on mourning for the Duke; while even the pusillanimous diet of Ratisbon ventured to protest against the violation of neutral territory. A week after this barbarous act the Senate, prefects, mayors, bishops, and other officials, all of whom had been appointed by Bonaparte, prayed him to assume the Imperial purple, and to give to France an hereditary throne. The Tribunate also passed a resolution in favour of imperial rule unanimously, with the single exception of Carnot, who entered a manly protest; a decree of the Senate enforced the new Constitution, and on May 18th 1804. May.
Bonaparte became Napoleon, 1st Emperor of the French. Although nurtured in republican principles, the new Emperor had sufficient courtly instincts to create most of his relatives princes, but unlike most of the monarchs at this time, he was careful to choose competent men to carry out military and other duties which required real strength and intellect. The new dynasty was recognised at Berlin, and at Vienna the Emperor Francis of Germany and King of Hungary and Bohemia chose to imitate his late enemy, and to consolidate his title to the only part of his Empire which in all probability would not soon be in the possession of France. Thus the last Roman Emperor became the Emperor of Austria.

In England the news of the exalted rank of Napoleon roused little comment, but all the Press united in giving him the title of Usurper, even the *Courier*, usually very moderate in its opposition to France, pointing out that he had "neither ascended the throne as an hereditary Prince, nor as one chosen of the people."[2] The news of the re-establishment of a monarchy in France aroused great indignation in Russia. Alexander had no objection to Bonaparte as a successful

[1] Napoleon admitted in his will that he had ordered the Duc d'Enghien to be arrested and judged, on the ground that he was supporting assassins in Paris.

[2] *Courier*, May 15, 1804.

1804. May. soldier, and the head of a Republic, even although it was now very apparent that he had used him as a tool for his own ambitions, but as an Emperor of a rank equal to his own, Napoleon appeared in quite another character, and the Autocrat of all the Russias was by no means prepared to recognise the new assumption of title.

1804. August. The chief desire now of the new Emperor was to carry out his projected descent in force on the Kentish shores on some day in August, and he repaired to Boulogne for that purpose on July 20th. Everything was prepared, even to the medal which was to commemorate the event, with the motto "Descent en Angleterre," and "Frappé à Londres en 1804," thus reminding us of the elaborate prèparations to celebrate a successful invasion of England by the Spanish two hundred and sixteen years before.

The plan showed the extraordinary genius of the Emperor. At Brest were eighteen ships of the line under Admiral Ganteaume, but these were blocaded by the English; at Rochefort were five ships of the line under Admiral Villeneuve, also blockaded; but at Toulon were ten ships under Admiral Latouche Tréville, a most skilful sailor. He was ordered to sally forth and sail in the direction of Egypt, so that a rumour might prevail that he intended the reconquest of that country. When he arrived at the Straits of Gibraltar he was to turn and suddenly appear before Rochefort, and then before Brest, rallying the ships of Villeneuve and Ganteaume, in company with whom he was to sail straight for Boulogne. It seemed certain that the English could not oppose an equal force for two or three days, and in that time the army would have been transported in the flotilla, and London would have been reached. All these preparations were, however, completely upset by the death of Tréville on August 20th, and since there was not time to imbue a new chief with the details of the plan, the mighty invasion was postponed until another year.

Meanwhile the English had not been idle, and besides their large augmentation of the land forces, extensive preparations were made to meet and destroy the invaders before they could reach the coast. An immense number of small vessels, armed each with one or two heavy long guns, were

stationed at the Nore, and at other parts where the coast-line was favourable for landing. Besides these were heavy floating batteries, moored close to the coast, while a fleet of cruisers prowled up and down the channel ready to open fire upon the vessels of the flotilla, the moment they showed themselves outside their harbours. Admiral Lord Keith was in command of this important part of the scheme of defence. 1804. August.

The ports of reunion for the flotilla were Ostend, Dunkerque, Calais, Ambleteuse, Vimereux, Boulogne, and Etaples, and these places were all carefully watched, as were also Flushing and Helvoet. As was to be expected, several small engagements occurred during the year between the ships of the two Powers in the Channel, but no great loss was occasioned on either side. In the autumn the method of attack by fire ships was revived by the British. Several vessels about 21 feet long and 3¼ broad, without a mast and pointed at the ends like a wedge, were filled with gunpowder fired by a clock-work time fuse. These vessels were called catamarans, and were towed as close as possible to the fleet to be attacked, and then allowed to drift on to the enemy's ships. On October 1, 1804, four of these were launched at the fleet outside Boulogne, and all exploded satisfactorily, but did little harm, as only one was actually touching a boat at the critical moment.[1] 1804. October.

Altogether these encounters in 1804 were of little importance, and as no grand attempt was made to invade England we can only conjecture what would probably have happened if the original scheme had been carried out and a force landed. In estimating the early successes of the forces of the French Republic it must be remembered that in every country they entered a considerable number of the inhabitants were in favour of the principles which they desired to institute. In Holland there was a large and powerful republican party; in Northern Italy the people were fascinated and deceived by the word Liberty; in Switzerland considerable jealousy of the larger Cantonal Governments existed; in Naples the 1804.

[1] The French lost fourteen killed and seven wounded. The English were violently abused for this method of attack, but as James points out it was a perfectly legal and justifiable method of warfare. James' "Naval History," vol. iii. p. 233.

1804. weakness and corruption of the Court had disgusted the thinking part of the middle classes; on the Rhine the Governments of the petty Principalities were feeble and corrupt.

There was no strong feeling in England against the system of Government, although a considerable party wished for some reform of the representation in Parliament, and the specious sounds "liberty and equality" had but little effect either on the hard-headed man of commerce, or the country farmer labouring in the fields. It was not, therefore, a question of rousing up a civil war and then inventing a new Constitution, but of fighting an entire nation to the last man. It was not a question of rousing the emotions of a crowd by wordy promises, but of fighting a whole race, who, above all things, resent any interference by foreign nations or individuals.

It is an interesting occupation to speculate what might have happened if certain events had occurred, but a great waste of space in writing history. It is therefore sufficient to state that if Bonaparte and his force had succeeded in landing, in all probability England would have been spared another twelve years of warfare.

1804. October. Although Spain was contributing monthly payments to France, and in this manner had broken her neutrality, the English Government had not considered it a sufficient cause of declaring war, but on February 18, 1804, Mr. Frere, the British Minister at Madrid, was instructed to deliver a note stating that so long as the Spaniards continued in a position of nominal neutrality, any naval armament in their ports would be considered as putting an end to it. In September information was sent home by Admiral Cochrane that orders had been given by the Court of Madrid for arming at Ferrol six ships of war and other smaller vessels, and that similar orders had been given at Cartagena and at Cadiz. Lord Harrowby at once instructed Mr. Frere to state that he considered this as a hostile menace, and that Ferrol would be blockaded. As M. de Cevallos could not give an answer satisfactory to the British Government, Mr. Frere demanded his passports on November 7th; but meanwhile the British Government had given orders,

which they considered they were entitled to do after the warning in February, to detain any Spanish ships from America, and on October 6th four English warships had captured three Spanish frigates carrying treasure, and blown up another. On hearing of this M. d'Anduaga, the Spanish Ambassador in London, called upon Lord Harrowby for explanations. The Foreign Secretary then explained that the Government had announced its intention of engaging any ships of war which sailed to or from Ferrol, but that "to have announced more particularly the intention of detaining the treasure ships must either have been perfectly useless if the Spanish Government had no means of giving them notice of such intention, or must have afforded the opportunity of rendering it completely abortive."[1] This action of the British Government was undoubtedly an unusual one, but the action of Spain in aiding France with funds was illegal, and their arming vessels showed they intended hostilities at an early date. The result, as was expected, was a formal Declaration of War in December from the Court of Spain. 1804. October.

Early in this month Pitt lost the aid of a most important colleague. Lord Harrowby fell down the stone staircase of the Foreign Office, and injured his head so severely that he was forced to resign his post. Lord Mulgrave succeeded, and was soon engaged in most important diplomatic correspondence, but before this appointment was made Pitt determined to approach Addington with a view to his joining the Government, and after requiring some explanation regarding the Spanish war, he agreed to accept a peerage as Lord Sidmouth, and the Presidency of the Council. Thus the year 1804 ended with a strong united Government, determined to maintain the honour and prestige of the country abroad, and in perfect harmony with the majority of the House of Commons and of the people. 1804. December.

[1] Despatch to Mr. Frere, October 21, 1804.

CHAPTER XVIII

Napoleon writes again to George III.—Mulgrave answers to Talleyrand—Russia urging the Powers to war—Debate in Parliament—Papers relating to the war with Spain—Negotiations for a treaty of alliance with Russia—Austria hesitates—Prussia courted by France and the Powers—Nelson searches for the French fleet—Napoleon disappointed by Villeneuve—Capitulation of Ulm—Treaty of Potsdam—Russia attempts to arrange peace between Spain and England—Battle of Trafalgar—Retreat of General Kutusoff—Battle of Austerlitz—Treaty of Presburg—Death of Pitt—End of the first stage of the war.

1805. January. On January 1, 1805, Napoleon wrote again directly to the King. He began by stating that since he had been called to the throne of France by Providence and the suffrages of the Senate, the people, and the army, his sentiment was a wish for peace. He did not think it dishonourable to make the first overtures, and appealed to King George not to refuse himself the happiness of giving peace to the world. He thought the present moment was most favourable, and asked what the King hoped from the war. If he expected to raise up a coalition with some Powers of the Continent such a coalition would result merely in extending the preponderance and continental prestige of France. If he wished to take from France her colonies they were but a secondary object, and England already possessed more than she could guard. The world was large enough for both, and there were strong reasons to find the means of conciliating all if both had the goodwill. This letter was signed "Votre bon frère, Napoleon."[1]

On January 14th Lord Mulgrave sent the answer to Talleyrand, which the King "has commanded me to return to the communication addressed to his Majesty by the Chief of the French Government." He stated that King George had no subject so much at heart as to embrace the first

[1] F. O. Records, France, 71. Napoleon at this date also wrote to the King of Spain, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of Russia, and to the King and Queen of Naples.—*Correspondance de Napoléon*, vol. x. pp. 98, 103, 114.

opportunity of restoring to his subjects the blessings of peace on such grounds as might be consistent with the permanent safety and essential interests of his dominions. "This object his Majesty is persuaded cannot be satisfactorily obtained but by such arrangements as may at the same time provide for the future security and tranquillity of Europe. His Majesty feels it is impossible to give any more particular answer to the overture which he has received until he has communicated with his continental allies, especially with the Emperor of Russia." 1805. January.

The Czar had already broken off diplomatic intercourse with France in September, and was endeavouring to persuade Austria to do so likewise. Prussia as usual adopted a hesitating policy, and after the occupation of Hanover was inclined to form an alliance with France, but the murder of the Duke of Enghien caused her to remain neutral, Frederick William adhering to the temporising policy which he had adopted since 1797. Haugwitz retired from Court, and his place as Foreign Secretary was taken by Hardenberg, who had negotiated the Peace of Basle, and hoped to avert the ruin of his country by maintaining friendly relations with every one, forgetting that a nation, as well as an individual, who endeavours to conciliate all usually ends by pleasing none.

The usual communications relating to the discontent in France were still being sent home with the more valuable information that war between that Power and Austria was inevitable if it were not already declared.[1]

Parliament was opened by the King in person on January 15th, and the Royal Speech announced the war with Spain and the communication from France, and hoped that as negotiations were proceeding with Russia, the Commons would make suitable provision to carry on the campaign.

In February the Government demanded from the French passports for a "commissary of prisoners"; but Talleyrand, understanding this to mean an agent to arrange for the exchange of prisoners, refused to give them. The Govern-

[1] January 24, 1805: "The people here don't desire war, but the Government are obliged to occupy and distract the troops from the discontent which reigns among them."—F. O. Records, France, 71.

1805. January. ment then explained that the object of the intended appointment was not for an exchange of prisoners, but that it was specifically stated to be grounded on an earnest desire to afford to the unfortunate British prisoners those necessary comforts which in their actual state and under the circumstances of their present treatment were entirely withheld from them.[1] Probably no act of the French so incensed the British nation during the whole war as the detention and treatment of the private individuals travelling in France at the outbreak of hostilities.

On the debate on the Address, January 15th, Lord Grenville stated that he felt it to be his duty, and the duty of every man not only in that House but in the country at large, to concur in the determination to support the war with that vigour and firmness from which alone we could expect a successful and prosperous issue. Lord Hawkesbury endeavoured to justify the Government for their action in ordering the capture of the Spanish ships, and pointed out that our Minister had left Madrid before the news of the naval engagement reached Spain. In the House of Commons on the same day Fox revived the question of Catholic Emancipation, and regretted that no mention of it was made in the Speech. Regarding the Spanish war he thought "that the seizing of the Spanish frigates, loaded and destined as they were, does certainly bear an unseemly appearance, and one not much to the honour of this country."[2]

1805. February. The papers relating to the war with Spain were presented to Parliament during February, and occasioned some long and thorough debates. On the 11th Mr. Pitt pointed out that Spain was bound to France by a treaty which was both offensive and defensive, since they agreed to assist each other with fifteen ships of the line and 24,000 men, which assistance was to be given on the demand of the requiring party. The object of the Government as far back as October 1802 was to detach Spain from her alliance with France, and in June 1803 Mr. Frere was instructed to demand from the Spanish Government a renunciation of their treaty with that Power. "The answer of the Prince of Peace was vague

[1] F. O. Records, France, 71.

[2] "Parliamentary Debates," vol. iii. p. 34.

and inconclusive, but still it evinced a disposition to delay, and if possible to elude compliance with the demands of France." In August the Republic made a formal demand for the stipulated succours, and a Convention was concluded on October 19th by which Spain agreed to pay France three millions a year. When Spain commenced to arm, in spite of our warning, "what would have been said if the treasure ships had arrived safe, and replenished with dollars the coffers of Spain to be placed at the disposal of France and employed for our destruction."[1] In reply Fox admitted the right of this country to compel Spain to renounce the treaty of Ildefonso, or to declare hostilities against her, but he objected to the Ministers "not coming to an immediate explanation on the subject as soon as ever hostilities were renewed between this country and France." 1805. February.

Negotiations were now steadily proceeding with Russia for a treaty of alliance, the Emperor being flattered and pleased at the attention paid to his sentiments in the recent answer of Great Britain to the French overtures for peace. The Russian Minister, Prince Czartoryski, was not, however, at first disposed to be as firm as Pitt wished, and suggested that if Bonaparte were unalterably resolved not to restore Piedmont to its lawful sovereign, some arrangement should be made by which that country should become a part of the kingdom of Lombardy. By such means he hoped that the union between Piedmont and France would be prevented. He further suggested that the Ligurian Republic should be given as an indemnity to the King of Sardinia. Lord Leveson Gower replied that his Government objected to detaching Piedmont from his Sardinian Majesty's dominions. Czartorisky then suggested that England should cede something in the East Indies (some arrondissement to Pondicherry) which might be held out to the French nation as an equivalent for the cessions made by France, but the British Ambassadors stated his Majesty's Government would never consent to do more than restore the conquests made during the present war.[2] 1805. March.

The Czar was very anxious that Prussia should join in

[1] "Parliamentary Debates," vol. iii. p. 379.

[2] From Lord Leveson Gower, March 22, 1805. F. O. Records, Russia, 57.

1805. March. the coalition, and M. de Novosiltzoff was instructed to proceed to Berlin and inform the King that if the conditions of peace were not agreed to by France he would immediately commence hostilities. The King was, if possible, to be tempted, by promises of territorial acquisitions, to become a party to a general alliance; but if he could not be thus persuaded, M. de Novosiltzoff was to try the effects of a threat of a sudden irruption of troops into Prussian territory, and in order to accentuate this threat Russian troops were to be moved to the frontier directly the envoy reached Berlin.

Austria still held her hand, although contrary to his promises Bonaparte had decided to become King of Italy.[1] The Count de Stadion, Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg, would not enter into negotiations with Czartoryski or Leveson Gower, and excused himself by citing "a secret article of the Convention of Uchstedt, by which the Court of Vienna guarantees the arrangements that had been made in Italy up to the date of that Convention as a difficulty in the way of Austria concurring in the demands which the Court of St. Petersburg require as conditions of peace."[2]

Austria had good reasons to hesitate. Routine officialdom was an absolute bar to any intelligent action. The Emperor rigorously suppressed any sign of independent thought, the army existed only on paper, and the faults of the whole military system were well appreciated by the men who had suffered during the last campaign. Even Thugut was in favour of peace, and the Archduke Charles argued to the end against war, and entered into it with a heavy heart.

1805. April. The Courts of St. James and St. Petersburg were, however, determined, and on April 11th a treaty was arranged and signed at St. Petersburg by which Russia was to find 115,000 men, Austria 250,000, and England was to employ her fleets and transports and subsidise, in the proportion

[1] Napoleon explains his action to the Emperor of Austria, maintaining that he was compelled to occupy the Italian Republic with an army while Russian troops remained at Corfu, and English at Malta. He intended therefore to assume the crown of Italy.—*Correspondance*, vol. x. p. 231.

[2] From Leveson Gower, March 22, 1805. F. O. Records, Russia, 57.

of £1,250,000 for every 100,000 men. Their Majesties agreed to make common cause against France, her allies, and any power which by so close an union with her may impede the object of the present alliance. 1805. April.

There was no doubt to which Power this clause referred, and it was further suggested that in order to induce Prussia to come forward those districts ceded by her to France in 1796 should be restored at the Peace. No peace was to be concluded except by common consent, and the objects of the league were to drive the French from Italy, Holland, Switzerland, and Germany, to establish a barrier between France and Holland, and to limit the territory of the French Empire by the Rhine, the Moselle, the Alps, and the Pyrenees.[1] Nothing was stated concerning the restoration of the Bourbons, and the belligerent Powers were prepared to sanction any form of government compatible with the public tranquillity of France.[2] But while the allies were attempting to woo the undecided Prussia with territorial gems, Bonaparte was also using the same method of persuasion, and finally, just before the outbreak of hostilities, offered her Hanover as a price for her alliance. Hardenberg, who was posing as a friend of the allies, wished to close with this offer, but the King, fearing to offend some one or other, refused and remained neutral. As usual Pitt overrated the capacity of the allies, and as usual the latter expected to find the French unprepared for war, which erroneous opinion may have been due to the constant reports of the informers in Paris, who apparently considered they were doing their duty by continually prophesying the downfall of the French Government.

The question of Malta was still in the minds of Ministers, and Mulgrave wrote to Count Woronzow on May 7th, that "if evacuation of Malta is insisted upon by the French Government nothing will induce his Majesty to give it up";[3] but Pitt stated to M. Novosiltzoff on June 7th that although Malta was the most desirable and secure naval station for Great Britain in the Mediterranean, yet if "the arrangement 1805. June.

[1] From Leveson Gower, April 7, 1805. F. O. Records, Russia, 57.
[2] Ibid., August 5, 1805. Ibid.
[3] F. O. Records, Russia, 57.

1805. June. proposed respecting Malta could secure by negotiation an arrangement really satisfactory on the Continent, and particularly adequate barriers both for Italy and for Holland, and if we could obtain the only substitute for Malta which we think could at all answer the purpose (namely Minorca), we are ready to overcome our difficulties on this point; but on any other ground the sacrifice is one to which we cannot feel ourselves justified to consent."[1]

In May Bonaparte was crowned King of Italy, and about the same time the Republic of Genoa was annexed to France. These continual acts of aggrandisement proved conclusively that no Power on the Continent would be safe from the clutches of Napoleon; and at length, in August, Austria subscribed to the treaty, but claimed a subsidy of £300,000 from England, and in the same month Sweden acceded also. Thus was the third coalition formed against France.

1805. January. Pitt was now actively arranging to crush the French on the Continent, but Napoleon was as intent as ever on his plan for invading England. Early in the year he was at the camp at Boulogne, for he had constructed a new plan for obtaining the command of the Channel for the few hours necessary to effect a landing. The idea now was to draw the English fleet across the Atlantic by sailing straight for the West Indies, whence the French would return suddenly, and join with the Spaniards at Cadiz and Ferrol, the combined fleets then proceeding to Boulogne. The supreme command was entrusted to Villeneuve, who accordingly seized his opportunity, and sailed from Toulon on the 18th of January with eleven ships of the line.

1805. February. Nelson, who was in command of the Mediterranean fleet, at once began his famous search for the French, and arrived at Egypt on February 7th, but a fortnight later returned to Malta, where he heard that Villeneuve had put back to Toulon with his fleet in a crippled condition. On March 27th Nelson wrote home that he was convinced the French fleet was intended for Egypt because they were carrying 5000 saddles, and flying artillery which would be of no service elsewhere, but on the 30th Villeneuve again put to

[1] Pitt to Novosiltzoff, June 7, 1805. Stanhope, vol. iv. p. 307.

sea from Toulon, and being joined by the Spanish Admiral Gravina off Cadiz sailed for the West Indies. 1805. February.

Nelson, after leaving five frigates and some sloops at Malta for the defence of the Mediterranean, at once followed with ten sail of the line, and arrived at Barbadoes on June 4th. Here he found Lieutenant-General Sir William Meyers, who, the night before, had heard from Brigadier-General Brereton at St. Lucia that twenty-eight sail of the enemy's fleet had been seen to windward of St. Lucia steering in a southerly direction, and the General, thinking that an attack on Tobago or Trinidad was intended, offered to embark with 2000 troops, and to proceed to their relief.[1] 1805. May to July.

Nelson therefore sailed for Tobago, arriving there on the 6th, but finding no French fleet proceeded to Trinidad and Grenada. Finally he heard at Antigua that the French had sailed for home, and after despatching the swiftest of the English brigs to inform the British Government, he himself started for Europe on the 13th. Four days later he received intelligence from the ship *Sally* of North Carolina that she had seen a fleet of twenty-two large ships steering a course about NNE., or NNW. During these weeks the French fleet had arrived at Martinique on May 14th, and Villeneuve decided to attack Barbadoes, but relinquished the plan as soon as he heard that Nelson was following, and on June 9th sailed for home.

Nelson exerting himself to the utmost to catch the French arrived at Gibraltar on July 29th, but thinking that Villeneuve intended an invasion of Ireland, sailed at once to protect the Irish coast. Here again he was disappointed, and returned to Spithead on August 18th, after speaking Admiral Cornwallis's fleet at Ushant. The French had escaped Nelson but had been seen by Sir Robert Calder, who had been ordered to raise the blockade of Ferrol and Rochefort, and to await Villeneuve off Cape Finisterre, where he arrived on July 22nd, and fought a partial action in which two of the Spanish ships struck. Next day the action was not renewed by the French, although they had still eighteen ships to oppose to the fifteen English, and after

[1] "Nelson Despatches."

1805. May to July. some time the fleets sailed away in opposite directions by mutual consent. The French Admiral was severely blamed for not renewing the action, and Sir Robert was tried by a court-martial, and was found guilty of an error in judgment.

Villeneuve then proceeded to Ferrol, where he found orders from Napoleon to sail straight to Brest, to break its blockade by a battle with Cornwallis, and then to proceed into the Channel with Ganteaume. He knew, however, that Nelson must be close at hand, and retired to Cadiz.[1]

All this time Napoleon, in an agony of suspense, was waiting for the fleets to appear, and the whole army was under arms ready to embark at a moment's notice. Not a day, not even an hour could be spared, for news of the determination of Austria had reached him, and her army was already in movement to cross the frontier. Still he trusted that there would yet be time to strike a deadly blow at England, and then return to wage war with Germany.

At length the terrible news reached him that not only were his orders disobeyed, but his whole plan was therefore ruined, and thus was the most cherished of his schemes for a second time foiled. The agitation and anger of Napoleon were terrible to witness, but in a few hours he recovered his calm, and at once devised the plan of turning the "Army of England" against the Austrians.[2]

1805. September. On September 2nd Napoleon set out for Boulogne, and after remaining at Paris for some time arrived at Strasburg on the 26th, where he found his troops eager to cross the Rhine. General Mack and the Austrian army had crossed the Inn on the 8th into Bavaria for the purpose of preventing the Elector, who was known to be unfavourable to the coalition, joining his forces with those of France. But

[1] Villeneuve seems to have misunderstood his orders.

[2] The employment of the "Army of England" against a continental coalition was an alternative present to Napoleon's mind before he heard of Villeneuve's action. See his letter to Talleyrand, August 23rd, 1805. *Correspondance*, vol. xi. p. 117. On August 24th he writes to General Duroe that he does not intend to permit Austria to approach the French frontiers while he is engaged with England.

Mack miscalculated the rapidity of the movements of the French troops, and with a light-hearted cheerfulness pushed on with about 70,000 men to Ulm, where he intended to await on the defensive the Russian troops who could not arrive until the end of October. Here, at the beginning of the month, he suddenly discovered he was being surrounded by the "army of England" and the army of Hanover, who were streaming into Bavaria, and cutting him off from Vienna. At the critical moment, when his only chance of saving part of his army was a forced retreat into the Tyrol, or a dash through the French lines, Mack was mentally paralysed and remained in Ulm, although the Archduke Ferdinand, who was nominally the Commander-in-Chief, succeeded with part of the cavalry in escaping through the French cordon. On October 17th, it being now too late to hope for any succour or means of retreat, Mack with 25,000 men capitulated without striking a blow, and at the same time a still larger number surrendered outside the city. 1805. October.

The news of the capitulation at Ulm was received in England with incredulity until November 3rd, when Pitt and Mulgrave called on Lord Malmesbury with a Dutch newspaper in which was a full account, but as neither of them understood the language, they had brought it to the veteran diplomatist to translate. Lord Malmesbury thus writes in his journal: "I observed but too clearly the effect it had on Pitt, though he did his utmost to conceal it. This was the last time I saw him. The visit has left an indelible impression on my mind, as his manner and look were not his own, and gave me, in spite of myself, a foreboding of the loss with which we were threatened." 1805. November.

It is interesting to note that while the Prime Minister had received no official report of the capitulation on November 3rd, news of the event had been reported in the daily press five days before, showing that even in these days the newspapers were easily ahead of the Government in receiving and disseminating intelligence. On the 29th of October, twelve days after the capitulation, the *Times* stated, "It is with the deepest anguish we announce that the attack of the French upon the Austrian position at Ulm has been crowned with

1805. November. complete success." Most of the leading dailies, however, assumed a cheerfully optimistic tone. The *Morning Post* stated that "Bonaparte will not dare to continue his progress to Vienna until he shall have received reinforcements,"[1] and the *Courier* thought that some interruption would be made to Bonaparte's march to Vienna by an army of 100,000 Russians and Austrians, while the *Sun* considered that the loss was greatly exaggerated, but they all agreed in blaming General Mack for his failure.

1805. October. This crushing reverse of the Austrians came as a more severe blow to Pitt because he had just succeeded in inducing Prussia to enter into arrangements for a subsidiary treaty with England. The approach of the Russian army had caused Frederick William to arm, for he had not forgotten the threat of the Czar, but as usual he waited until the last moment before he decided which side to support. Napoleon had not hesitated to order General Bernadotte, the commander of his Austrian army, to pass through Prussian territory in order to reach Ulm before Mack had time to retreat, and this violation of neutral territory roused even Frederick William; but it is doubtful if this were the actual cause which decided him to join the allies, because the news of it only reached Potsdam on October 6th, whereas Mulgrave, writing to Lord Leveson Gower[2] on October 25, was able to announce that Prussia was prepared to join with them. Now it must be remembered, first, that although this despatch was written after the date of Mack's capitulation, no news of it had yet reached England; and, secondly, that if the violation of Prussian territory had been the cause of the King's action, it only allows nineteen days at the longest for him to have sent a messenger to the Court of St. James and to have arranged to join the allies. It is therefore far more likely

[1] *Morning Post*, October 30, 1805.

[2] To Lord G. L. Gower, October 25, 1805: "His Majesty has received satisfactory intelligence from Berlin that Prussia is prepared to enter into arrangements for a subsidiary treaty with this country for the purpose of renewing hostile operations against France. Lord Harrowby is to go to Berlin invested with the most ample powers. The object is to bring the armies of Prussia into the rear of the French armies, and thus produce a diversion in favour of the Austrian forces. His Majesty has also embarked a body of his Hanoverian troops to co-operate with the Prussians and Swedes for the deliverance of Hanover."—F. O. Records, Russia, 59.

that the approach of the Russian troops decided Frederick William to join with those whom he considered the more likely to be successful, and this theory would be in strict conformity with what we know both of his character, and that of his Minister Hardenberg. It was now too late for the King to vacillate, for before the news arrived of Mack's capitulation Alexander was on the road to Berlin, and after some deliberation between the two monarchs a treaty was signed at Potsdam on November 3rd. By this treaty Prussia agreed to demand from Napoleon the evacuation of Germany, Switzerland, and Holland, and an indemnity for the King of Piedmont. If he refused the mediation of Prussia on these terms, the King engaged to bring 180,000 men into the field. 1805. October.

Alexander must indeed be regarded as the moving spirit of the third coalition, for not only did he persuade Frederick William to join the allies against France, but he was also endeavouring to arrange a peace between England and Spain. In the autumn of 1805 Baron Strogonoff, the Russian Ambassador at London, had several conferences with Pitt and Mulgrave on the subject of a peace with Spain through the mediation of the Russian Emperor, and suggested that the considerations likely to influence the decision of the Court of Madrid would be (1) a restitution of the colonies, frigates, and treasures taken, or an equivalent compensation; (2) a security to the possessions of Spain from all hostilities during a specified period; and (3) a promise on the part of England to furnish Spain with ammunition and provisions. Alexander, fearing that France would attack Spain to prevent a separate peace being concluded between her and England before she was ready to resist, also instructed Strogonoff to propose that a secret concert should be established between the Courts of St. James and Madrid, by which they should agree to pretend to be at war and carry on the operations as far as necessary to avoid giving suspicion to France, until Spain should be in a state of preparation to commence hostilities against that Power. In answer to this proposal Mulgrave wrote on October 4th that his Majesty would be pleased to accept the good offices of his Imperial Majesty for effecting peace with Spain on a secure and solid basis,

1805. October

and would bind himself to such arrangements at the conclusion of a general peace as might be consistent with equity and the general claims of the other Powers. He would be prepared to meet a pacific declaration on the part of Spain if accompanied with a decided declaration against France, while any arrangement which would tend to ensure the future independence of Portugal, and secure that country from the influence of France, would meet with the entire concurrence and support of his Majesty.

With respect to the suggestions of Baron Strogonoff Mulgrave replied that (1) his Majesty had not possessed himself of any of the colonies of Spain during the present war, and it was therefore superfluous to enter into any arrangement for an object which had no existence, but he could not consent to return the frigates captured, although (2) he would engage not to possess himself of any of the American colonies of Spain if she agreed to detach herself from France and join the coalesced Powers within three months, under which circumstances (3) England would be willing to give a supply of arms and ammunition. The arrangement for a secret concert seemed to the English Government to be impracticable so long as Spain acted with France.[1]

The good intentions of Alexander to win over Spain to the side of the allies were destined to remain unfulfilled, for while he was labouring to ensure that France should remain absolutely without an ally in the whole of Europe, and to bring up German armies destined to be annihilated by Napoleon, an event occurred which not only will always live in history as one of the greatest achievements of naval warfare, but which has succeeded, more than all other victories combined, in raising the prestige of England as a maritime power far higher than that of any other country. Nelson having failed to discover Villeneuve's fleet returned to Spithead on August 18th and had one or two weeks' rest, during which he wrote to Pitt pressing upon him the importance of Sardinia to England, both as a naval base for supplying any fleet stationed off Toulon, and as a means of protecting British trade to Italy and the Levant. He could not rest contented, however, until he had found and crushed

[1] Despatch dated October 4, 1805. F. O. Records, Spain, 55.

the fleet which he had so ardently chased across the Atlantic after watching and seeking for it for over two years, and he therefore offered to undertake the command of the great fleet designed to be sent out to meet, and if possible engage the enemy off Cadiz. The Admiralty at once gladly accepted his services, and on September 13th he left his home and friends at Merton for the last time, and a fortnight later was at the head of the fleet off the coast of Cadiz. 1805. October.

On October 19th, after some weeks of rest inside the port of Cadiz, Villeneuve at length issued forth with his vessels newly equipped and appointed. Combined with the Spanish fleet under Gravina he had thirty-three ships of the line, six frigates, and two brigs. Acting under the conviction that the French would push for Toulon as soon as they came out of port, Nelson made the signal to sail for Cape Spartel as the best means of meeting with them at the Gut of Gibraltar. Villeneuve, perceiving that he could not avoid an action, wore round and stood back for Cadiz, but Nelson arranged his fleet to windward in order to prevent the French escaping either to Toulon or Brest. On the 21st, at daylight, the enemy were thus seen in a line from E. to ESE.,[1] but at 8 A.M. the line extended in a direction from NNE. to SSW. According to Sir Edward Codrington Nelson took advantage of their confusion in wearing and bore down to attack them with his fleet in two columns.[2] The fleets were now only a few miles apart, the enemy's line being crescent-shaped, with the *Bucentaure*, Admiral Villeneuve's ship, in the centre, and the *Prince of Asturias*, which carried Gravina's flag, in the rear, but the French and Spanish ships were mixed without any regard to order arising from their nationality. It was at this moment that Nelson hoisted his famous signal regarding which a good deal of controversy has since arisen, but the authentic version seems to be the short "England expects that every man will do his duty," which certainly cannot be improved upon.

[1] Private Diary of Lord Nelson. Nicholas, "Despatches," vol. vii. p. 139.

[2] "Memoir of Sir Edward Codrington," vol. i. p. 58.

1805. October. The British fleet, consisting of twenty-six ships of the line and four frigates, attacked in two columns, led by the *Victory* with Nelson, and the *Royal Sovereign* with Collingwood, the former standing for the van and the latter for the centre of the enemy's line. At 11.30 A.M. the enemy opened fire on the *Royal Sovereign*, which replied a few minutes afterwards. Ten minutes later the enemy fired at the *Victory* and *Temeraire*, and at 12.30, in attempting to pass through the line, the former fell on board the tenth and eleventh ships. Nelson, who was dressed in his Admiral's uniform, and was wearing the stars of his several orders, became a conspicuous mark for the riflemen upon the mizenmast of the French ship the *Redoutable*, and at 1.15 was severely wounded in the shoulder, but a few minutes later the *Redoutable* struck her colours. The *Victory* therefore stopped firing her starboard guns but continued engaged with the *Santissima, Trinidad*, and others of the enemy's ships on the larboard side. Meanwhile Collingwood had broken through the line at about the twelfth ship from the rear, and the other ships astern of their leaders breaking through in various places, the action then became general. By 3 P.M. several of the enemy had struck, and a few minutes afterwards four ships of the enemy's van tacked and stood along the English line to windward, which caused the *Victory* at 3.40 P.M. to signal to engage them. At 4.15 P.M. the Spanish Rear-Admiral struck his colours, the enemy's line by now being completely broken, but partial firing was maintained until 4.30, when Nelson died, cheered at the end by the news of an undoubted and complete victory. At this time fourteen or fifteen ships had struck, but Admiral Gravina with a few others succeeded in reaching Cadiz. He was, however, not permitted to remain in harbour, and was at once ordered to proceed again to sea. On the night of the 20th a heavy gale rose, and the Admiral's ship was dismasted, while several of the other ships were either captured or driven ashore.

Of the 33 ships of the enemy's fleet 16 were destroyed or captured, 6 were in Cadiz total wrecks, 3 were in Cadiz serviceable, 4 in Gibraltar, and only 4 escaped. On the

L. F. Abbott, pinx.

Walker & Cockerell, phtsc

Viscount Nelson.

English side the loss was 449 men killed and 1214 wounded.[1] 1805. October.

The news of this glorious success reached England and was printed on November 7th in the *Times*, but rejoicings for the victory of Trafalgar were hushed by the death of the gallant Admiral who had done so much for the security of England, and for her naval prestige. Nelson's brother and heir to his baronry was at once created an earl, and received a grant of £6000 a year and a sum of £100,000, while Collingwood, who had also so gallantly fought his part, was created a baron.

It is difficult to estimate the far-reaching effects of the battle of Trafalgar, concluding as it did the series of naval engagements with the French nation, and forming a fitting climax to the victories of the First of June, of Camperdown, St. Vincent, the Nile, and Copenhagen. In the first place, all possibility of a successful invasion of Great Britain had now passed, and whereas but few French ships remained to interfere with British commerce, the whole of the British fleet was now liberated to harass that of the enemy, and to conquer her colonies. Nor were the consequences by any means limited to the present campaign, for it is scarcely too much to say that the maritime supremacy of Great Britain, even to the present time, rests to a great extent upon the enormous prestige now acquired. While our armies have been conquering Asia and Africa, and our colonists acquiring Australia and the greater part of North America, the security of the central island of the British Empire has always been maintained by her fleets, while her commerce has fearlessly spread to every quarter of the globe, protected now by steel machines instead of wooden-walled ships, but directed by the same indomitable courage and skill of the British sailor.

Nelson is essentially the hero of the modern Englishman; the hero of a race which always judges by results, and while tolerant of failure only truly admires absolute and great success. It is a matter of but secondary importance to the

[1] For full accounts of the battle see "Despatches and Letters of Lord Nelson," by Sir J. Nicholas, vol. vii.; and the "Naval History of Great Britain," James, vol. iv. p. 23 *et seq.*

1805. October. nation what the private life or character of a public man may be, and, indeed, many faults which are regarded as weaknesses in the commonplace individual, may in the great act as a powerful stimulus to success. Violent ambition and love of titles, orders, and public applause are in themselves petty, but if such characteristics lead to great acts, they have their utility. It is sufficient that the great sailor hero crushed the enemy at Trafalgar; the man Nelson was of no interest but to his immediate friends. It was only to be expected that this great victory should have roused the hearty applause of all classes, who chose for the subject of their demonstration the Prime Minister. On November 9th, as usual, a great banquet was given at the Guildhall, and Pitt, whose popularity had been on the wane, was now received by the crowds with vociferous cheers as he passed through the streets to attend.

At the banquet the Lord Mayor proposed his health as the "Saviour of Europe," and Pitt replied, "I return you many thanks for the honour you have done me; but Europe is not to be saved by any single man; England has saved herself by her exertions, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example." Coming as the last public utterance of a man whose life had been one series of high and noble aims, thwarted at almost every step by the force of events, but who had now lived to see his dearest wish fulfilled, the security of England, these impressive words have a significance beyond their mere meaning, and carry with them the impress of simple and earnest sincerity and truth.

1805. November. The defeats of the fleets of France and Spain, although of such great importance to the security of England, could not affect Napoleon's victorious advance into Germany after the capitulation at Ulm. A few days subsequent to that disastrous event General Kutusoff and 30,000 Russians reached Bavaria, but without the aid of Mack's troops it was useless attempting to defend the frontier line of the Inn, and the allies fell back as the French approached the river. Napoleon at once pushed forward with overwhelming strength towards Vienna, and as the remnant of the Austrian army, even when aided by Kutusoff's troops, were not strong enough to hold that city, it was decided to abandon it, and to unite

the retreating forces with a second Russian army north of the Danube. The Court therefore left the capital on November 7th, and the French took possession on the 13th, capturing the bridge connecting the city with the north bank of the river, before the allies could blow it up. There was no obstacle therefore to an immediate pursuit, and Napoleon prepared to follow and annihilate the allied army before they could join with the second Russian contingent. But this was not to be, for General Kutusoff conducted the retreat with such skill that he managed to effect a junction with his reinforcements between Olmütz and Brunn in Moravia. The allies had now 80,000 troops in camp against which it was impossible for Napoleon, after guarding his lines of communications and protecting himself from an attack from Italy, to bring more than 70,000 men. 1805. November.

The Russian Generals had at this time the greatest confidence, and if the Prussian Government had observed the stipulations of the treaty which they had signed, and hurried troops to the aid of the allies, the result might have been very different. The Emperor of Austria was, on the other hand, very depressed by the disaster to General Mack at Ulm, and wrote several letters to Bonaparte endeavouring to arrange terms.[1] The replies were marked by a tone of superiority, and affected commiseration for the misfortunes of the Emperor Francis, and by invectives against the British Government, and in one Napoleon thus stated his conditions: "He demands the cession of the whole of the Venetian Territory to the kingdom of Italy, and the surrender of all the Austrian possessions in (illegible in despatch) as a recompense to the Electors of Bavaria, Baden, and Würtemburg, for their adherence to the French cause."[2] The Czar of Russia, being influenced by the feelings of the Emperor of Germany, next consented that an Austrian negotiator should be sent to Napoleon in spite of the opposition of Lord Gower, who considered that it was a wrong time to sue for peace after a

[1] From Leveson Gower, Olmütz, November 25, 1805: "Prince Czartoryski has communicated to me a series of letters that have passed between the Emperor and Bonaparte subsequent to Ulm. These are couched in terms of humility and submission unworthy of a great monarch."—F. O. Records, Russia, 59.

[2] Ibid.

1805. November. great French victory. The Czar himself, however, was determined to continue the war, and at this date (November 25th) Gower wrote that the French were preparing to retreat, and the Russian armies to follow them.[1]

The British Government also were sanguine that favourable prospects still remained of an early change of circumstances, and "looked with confidence to the great exertions which the powerful resources of the hardy and warlike population of the Austrian Dominions would immediately afford in conjunction with the armies of Russia."[2] For some months preparations had been made for an expedition to the north of Germany in order to recover Hanover, and afford a diversion to the Austrians. It was to consist of 18,000 men under the command of Lord Cathcart, and numbered among its officers Sir Arthur Wellesley, but it had been prevented by contrary winds from sailing. Lord Harrowby also had been sent to Berlin on a special mission to urge the early activity of the Prussian armies and to negotiate an alliance.

The plan of Kutusoff was to keep the French in camp until a Prussian force was ready to attack their communications, but the scarcity of provisions was sorely trying the discipline of the allied army, and the Czar was eager for battle. The Emperor therefore agreed to an attack, and a plan was drawn up to march round Napoleon's flank and cut off his communications with Vienna. The position of the French was therefore undoubtedly a dangerous one, and every mile that Napoleon advanced into Moravia increased the risk, proving that the strategy of Kutusoff was undoubtedly the best; but the principle of luring the French as far as possible from their base, which was invented afterwards by Wellington in Spain, and practised with such success in Russia, was not yet known.

On November 28th Haugwitz, who had just been appointed joint Foreign Minister for Prussia with Hardenberg, approached the French camp with the demands of the King, but it was essential to Napoleon that he should not deliver

[1] On this same date, November 25th, Napoleon wrote to Talleyrand that he intended to possess Venice, and to unite it to the kingdom of Italy. There is no mention of any retreat.—"Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 435.

[2] To Sir Arthur Paget, November 5, 1805. F. O. Records, Austria, 75.

his ultimatum, and so involve a declaration of war on Prussia, before he had had time to crush the other two allies. In order to gain time, therefore, Haugwitz was referred to Talleyrand at Vienna, who, by means of various excuses, politely delayed the communication until the Prussian envoy should have some cause to alter his mind. 1805. November.

Napoleon, who already knew the exact plans of the allies,[1] made his dispositions accordingly, and at early dawn on December 2nd, to his great delight, he discovered the Russian columns endeavouring to move round his position. Waiting until the most advanced columns were far ahead of the main body he practised his usual tactics, which never failed him until the battle of Waterloo, and, by vigorously attacking the centre of the allied line, drove a solid wedge of troops between the foremost columns and their supports, completely cutting the army into two. This movement, which was performed by Soult's division, enabled him to deal with the allied army piecemeal, and to crush its divisions in every part of the field. The Russians fought desperately and suffered severely, but they were outgeneralled, and at the end of the day the allies had lost 15,000 killed and wounded, 20,000 prisoners, and 180 cannon. This, which is perhaps the most splendid victory Napoleon ever gained, is usually known as the battle of Austerlitz, so called from the name of the town near which it was fought. 1805. December.

The results were as great as the victory, for the campaign of 1805, which had been entered into with such a hopeful spirit by the allies, was now virtually over, and on December 4th the Emperor Francis met the conqueror on the field of battle, and accepted an armistice which involved the removal of all the Russian troops from his territory.

While these events were happening the Earl of Harrington, on November 28th, had been appointed to the Court of the Emperor of Austria for a special mission in order to gain information of the true strength of the German army, to cheer up the Emperor by the news of the great exertions

[1] In the Address to the Army of December 1st, it is expressly stated that "pendant qu'ils marcheront pour tourner ma droite, ils me présenteront le flanc." The General Orders of the day show that Napoleon was well aware of the intentions of the allies.—*Correspondance*, vol. xi. p. 442.

1805. December. being made in England, and to help him with advice.[1] Before he arrived the armistice was concluded, and as this set aside all the objects of his mission he was therefore instructed to carry on the further progress of the negotiations commenced by Lord Harrowby at Berlin. But Haugwitz, who had been instructed to submit to the demands of Napoleon if Austria was forced to sue for peace, now at once laid himself and his country at the feet of the conqueror, and even before Austria had concluded a treaty of peace agreed to an alliance with Napoleon in return for the dominion of Hanover (December 15, 1805).

Ten days afterwards Haugwitz arrived at Berlin with his treaty, and Hardenberg then told Lord Harrington that Napoleon had insisted on the removal of the British troops from the Electorate of Hanover.[2] Thus the expedition under Lord Cathcart, which was so carefully prepared and had at length arrived, was ignominiously taken home. There was indeed no choice in the matter, for although George III. was Elector, Hanover was part of the German Empire and under the protection of the King of Prussia; but the gift of the Electorate to Prussia by Napoleon had of course no legal significance at all, since it was merely occupied by French armies and had never been annexed.

Austria was now hopelessly beaten, and Prussia had as usual joined the winning side, but Russia was still firmly resolved to continue the struggle if means could be found to do so. Alexander, indeed, had at once sent to Berlin for help after the battle of Austerlitz, and before he had learnt how the King, Hardenberg, and Haugwitz conducted their diplomacy and fulfilled their treaty engagements. There were indeed some among the King's advisers who maintained that the treaty must be repudiated and the envoy disgraced; but the disaster at Austerlitz, and the knowledge that Austria was treating for peace, showed the absolute hopelessness of the struggle, and the treaty was finally ratified after a clause

[1] Lord Harrington was instructed to urge "the importance of providing most carefully against a recurrence of that state of dissension and division among the principal officers of the army to which the ill success of his Imperial Majesty's forces may be so entirely attributed."—F. O. Records, Austrian Army, 77.

[2] F. O. Records, Austrian Army, 77.

had been inserted which nominally reserved to George III. some voice in the fate of Hanover. 1805. December.

Alexander and his Ministers were now nonplussed, but Czartoryski still had hopes that means could be discovered for attaining the evacuation of Italy and the other countries occupied by France, and intended to abide firmly by the allies so long as they agreed to fight.[1]

On December 27th peace was definitely concluded between France and Austria by the Treaty of Presburg. The terms were practically the same as Bonaparte had offered to the Emperor before the battle of Austerlitz, showing that he had already formulated his demands before he had crushed his foes. Venetia was ceded to Napoleon's kingdom of Italy, the Tyrol was given to Bavaria, and other districts in Western Germany were ceded to Baden and Würtemburg. In all, Austria lost 28,000 square miles, and the Emperor was compelled to recognise the sovereignty and independence of Baden, Bavaria, and Würtemburg, the Electors of the latter two countries receiving the title of King. The Constitution of the German Empire now no longer existed, even in name, and the old fiction of the Holy Roman Empire was finally completely dropped.

The defeat at Austerlitz was a terrible blow to Pitt, and indeed by many is ascribed as the immediate cause of his death; but, although a great shock or disappointment might have caused a nervous relapse, it is impossible that it should have repelled the gout from his feet into some vital organ, as was the opinion of his domestics and others at Bath. He was, however, hopeful even to the last, and in a letter to Lord Castlereagh on January 6, 1806, stated that his second attack of gout was subsiding, and he hoped to recover from it quicker than from the former one. It is curious to notice in this letter he referred to the return of the forces of Lord Cathcart from Hanover in almost the identical words he 1806. January.

[1] From Leveson Gower, Troppau, December 15, 1805. Czartoryski says that "If Prussia refuses to act no other means are left open of obtaining tolerable terms of peace but that of occupying with English and Russian troops certain positions in Egypt and Turkey, and in case of a negotiation the abandonment of them may be expected to obtain from France the evacuation of Italy and the other countries now occupied by French troops."—F. O. Records, Austria.

1806. January. used after the ill-fated expedition to Holland,[1] "I certainly feel a strong desire to see so valuable a body of troops at home," but stated that he should be satisfied with what the Cabinet decided to do regarding them. He left Bath on January 9th, taking three days to reach his home at Putney, where he arrived in a terribly emaciated condition, and gradually grew worse until he expired on January 23rd.

There are certain names which will always stand out prominently in history as marking a great epoch, and Pitt is one of these. Called at an exceedingly early age to the head of affairs, he started his political career with ideals which showed the very lofty nature of his character, and if they were impossible to realise, it was not the fault of the statesman who conceived them, but was due to the fact that the time was not ripe to convert them into practical measures. He was great for the reason that he conceived great enterprises and great measures, and if these were not often successful, their failure cannot be ascribed as due to the head of the Government. He was anxious and willing to reform Parliament, but the excesses of the admirers of the principles of the French Revolution necessitated the postponement of any measure for that purpose; he would have granted some measure of relief to the Catholics, but the King absolutely forbade it; he worked hard to form coalitions with the Continental Powers against France, but was the only contracting Minister who placed the common object before the desire to aggrandise his own country, and the only one who consistently worked for that single object.

Pitt has frequently been blamed for the methods he adopted to cause the Government and people of Ireland to accept the Act of Union, but it must be remembered that bribery and corruption were the usual instruments of statesmen at that time, and no one can accuse him of ever endeavouring to benefit himself by such methods. Even his bitterest opponents were willing to admit his disinterestedness, and when one compares his diplomacy abroad with that of any other statesman at the time, it shines out clearly in an honest and honourable light, amidst the dark-

[1] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iv. p. 367.

ness of intrigue and selfishness. The chief glory of Pitt lay in the fact that he was frankly open to his allies and allowed them to see that the policy of England was unalterably fixed, and was not subject to contingencies. In the earliest days of the war he stated that England would seek her recompense in the colonies of France, and beyond that he had no wish or idea of aggrandising his country. Although Russia, Prussia, and Austria were all seeking to form alliances only to promote their own ends, and were ready to join the victor whoever it might be, in order to wrest concessions from the vanquished, Pitt no less than three times brought the three Powers into line, in order to carry out such measures against France as might secure a permanent peace. 1806. January.

It was and is now the custom to praise or blame Ministers for the success or failure of operations on the field of battle, although it is obvious that the Minister's duty ends when he has raised the money, found the troops, equipped and transported them to the scene of hostilities. From that moment the Commander-in-Chief in the field takes sole charge, and the responsibility of the Government is limited to the appointment of a suitable person to fulfil the duties of that extremely difficult and arduous post. The failure of the expedition to Holland was chiefly due to the incapacity of the Duke of York, who was appointed by George III.; the defeat of the allies at Austerlitz was due to the fact that the advice of their most competent General, Kutusoff, was overridden by the Czar and the Emperor of Austria.

In neither case could any blame be attached to the English Cabinet, and every one who studied the question must have understood that fact. The Opposition certainly intended to criticise severely the conduct of the Ministers, but there is no reason to suppose that Pitt's Government, had he lived, would have been overthrown.

Outside Parliament the Press was for the most part still cheerful. The *Courier* stated that they knew not "how Prussia could avoid a war with France without the most servile submission and apology,"[1] and the *Sun* thought that

[1] December 30, 1805.

1806. January. Austria was "almost conquered," and calculated that there were still 450,000 men ready to act, but the *Times* was very depressed. None of the leading organs, however, suggested that it was the fault of the English Government, or hinted that a change of Administration would be for the benefit of the country.

The only question for the Opposition was whether Pitt was justified in raising such enormous sums of money to subsidise foreign troops, who had repeatedly shown they were incapable of beating the armies of the French Government, and whether it was to the real interest of Great Britain to enter so largely into the contest. The insular sense of superiority and hopeful spirit of the English race has hurried the country into many wars, in the belief that it would easily prove the victor, but if in every campaign during the last two centuries the contest has been far more bloody, lengthy, and expensive than has been anticipated, the persistent and determined efforts of the nation have in the end led to a successful result. The war against the French Republic was begun in the confident hope that the Monarchy would be restored in a few months, and that the acquisition of the French colonies would compensate the nation for its sacrifices. At the Peace of Amiens it was clear that neither of these favourable issues could be expected, but it was also very evident that it was of the greatest importance for England to gain a supremacy in the Mediterranean, and it would have been much wiser if Ministers had clearly announced there and then that they did not mean to relinquish Malta or the Cape of Good Hope. The chief interests of England at that time were, next to her own security, in India, where her power was daily growing and her territory being increased; but in spite of the fact that the command of the highway to the East was frequently the subject of debate, it was not considered by Addington and Pitt as of such paramount importance as obtaining peace.

It must also be remembered that when Pitt joined the third great coalition against France an enormous army was drawn up in sight of the English shores, ready at any moment to descend upon them, and his first duty was therefore to

insure the security of England. The French fleets were blockaded, it is true, but they had not been destroyed, and a few hours' supremacy in the Channel was all that Napoleon required. It was therefore of the greatest importance to engage the French with an enormous force on the Continent, so that not only should Italy, Switzerland, and Holland be freed from the rule of Napoleon, but that his army should be drawn from Boulogne, and the menace to England removed. Pitt could not be expected to foresee that a superior force of Austrians and Russians would be utterly defeated on their own ground by a French army operating far from the French frontier; nor could he be blamed for the failure of military operations undertaken by the Emperors against the advice of the Russian General. 1806. January.

This last great plan must therefore be regarded as one of the wisest Pitt ever formulated, and one which had all the essentials for a successful issue. That it was attended by failure was due to the non-fulfilment by Prussia of her treaty obligations, and to the fact that Napoleon's generalship was as perfect as the allies' was faulty. Had Pitt been able to join in a discussion in Parliament he would have had but little difficulty in vindicating every step he had taken, but he had already made his last speech, and was lying seriously ill, when Parliament assembled on January 21, 1806.

The King's speech referred to the great victory at Trafalgar, which "has not only confirmed in the most signal manner the maritime superiority of this country, but has essentially contributed to the security of his Majesty's dominions." The King deeply laments that the events of the war in Germany have disappointed his hopes and led to an unfavourable issue, but it is a great consolation that although the Emperor of Austria has been obliged to withdraw from the contest, "his Majesty continues to receive from his august ally, the Emperor of Russia, the strongest assurances of unshaken adherence to the policy by which he has hitherto been actuated."[1] In the House of Lords the Earl of Essex moved an address of thanks, which was seconded by Lord Carleton, who stated that "the

[1] "Parliamentary Debates," vol. vi. p. 2.

1806. January. interests of Russia and this country have always been and will ever continue to be the same," and was sure that their lordships must all feel the necessity of prosecuting the war with vigour.

Earl Cowper said he intended to move an amendment to the Address, but "was induced to postpone it from the consideration solely of the indisposition of a right honourable gentleman at the head of his Majesty's Councils," and was content to read the amendment he had drawn up, which tended to express the deep concern which the House felt at the disaster recently sustained by his Majesty's allies on the Continent, and to assure his Majesty that the House would take the earliest opportunity of inquiring into the causes of these disasters so far as they might be connected with the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers.

Lord Grenville and Lord Hawkesbury both agreed with Earl Cowper that it was not a fitting time to discuss the conduct of the Ministers, but Lord Mulgrave expressed his conviction that that conduct, "when the requisite information was before the House, would meet their unanimous approbation." In the House of Commons, on the same day, consideration for the illness of Mr. Pitt also prevented Lord Henry Petty moving an amendment to inquire into the cause of the disasters on the Continent as far as they might be connected with the conduct of his Majesty's Ministers. Mr. Fox hoped we should not be wanting "in our expressions of indignation at those ill-concerted, ill-conducted, ill-supported, and ill-executed plans, which have placed the country in the most extraordinary and calamitous situation it ever experienced," but nevertheless agreed in the propriety of postponing the discussion.

A week later, after the death of Pitt, the discussion was resumed, and Lord Castlereagh pointed out that the conduct of the campaign proceeded solely from Austria, and that the position taken up by General Mack at Ulm was contrary to the plan of operations framed by Austria herself. The Court of St. Petersburg had strictly conformed to the plan, and 50,000 Russians had arrived on the Inn two days sooner than they were expected.

Mr. Fox thought the discussion ought to be postponed

until the persons who were to form the Administration had had time to master all the information on the subject. The only duty remaining was to arrange a public funeral for the Prime Minister, and on January 27th Mr. Henry Lascelles moved that the remains of the Right Honourable William Pitt be interred at the public charge, and that a monument be erected in the collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of that "excellent statesman, with an inscription expressive of the public sense of so great and irreparable a loss." It was usual at this time for the Opposition to resist post-mortem honours, in reality a more honest if less decent custom than the present one, which compels the leader of the Opposition to support a motion granting honours to a dead man for services performed, which did not, as a rule, meet with his approval, and which he has steadily opposed during his life. 1806. January.

Lord Folkestone, Mr. Hiley Addington, and Mr. Fox could not acknowledge the "distinguished service," although they were all ready to vote some mark of respect for the disinterestedness of Pitt as a statesman; but Mr. Windham claimed that the splendid talents and public services of Mr. Burke gave him a much higher claim to public honours than could be asserted to belong to the character of Mr. Pitt, and yet the party he supported in his last years would not vote him public honours. The motion was carried by a large majority, and the remains of Pitt were given every honour suitable to a great statesman who had been at the head of affairs for twenty years. The death of Pitt, and the breaking up of the third coalition against France, may fittingly be regarded as the end of the first period of the war, for the peace after the Treaty of Amiens can only be regarded as a temporary break in hostilities. Until this date the Powers, except England, were only united against France in the hope of benefiting themselves; after it they were, one after the other, forced into war to defend themselves at home. Until this date all the Powers were jealous of the maritime supremacy of Great Britain, and were prepared to unite to dispute it with her; after it there was not the least chance of any success at sea against the predominant Power. England, who until now had always to be on guard against

1806. January. an invasion of her shores, could at her leisure send armies to the Continent, blockade any port with her fleet, and at the same time annex her enemies' colonies, and carry on her commerce at sea without fear.

England indeed had gained heavily in every way at the cost of comparatively few lives, but of a great deal of treasure; but when we remember that the acquisition of Ceylon, the Cape of Good Hope, Malta, and many valuable islands in the East and West Indies were the results of the war with France, we must be prepared to admit that the cost of it was not excessive compared with the advantages gained.

CHAPTER XIX

Men whose influence is still apparent—Beethoven and the Heroic Symphony —Gainsborough the father of English painters—Turner and his art—Metaphysics—Berkeley and Hume—Hume as an historian—Robertson the historian—Palcy and the "Evidences of Christianity"—Bentham and universal happiness—The utilitarian school of philosophy—Political economy —Adam Smith and the "Wealth of Nations"—The fallacy of protection—Results of Free Trade—England as the Banker for the world—The theory of Malthus.

At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries Europe was chiefly occupied in testing, with the aid of a great deal of violence, various theories of political government. Established authorities were in constant conflict with constitution-mongers, and much energy was expended in resisting the selfish and gaudy ambitions of both heaven-born and self-appointed monarchs. Much of the effect of their actions was reversed a few years later, but during the same epoch men lived whose works will never die, and whose influence on the world is still every day apparent. A history would indeed be barren without some account of these workers who raised the mental and moral condition and the material welfare of the whole community, while Courts resisted revolution, statesmen planned coalitions, and generals temporarily altered the political map of the world.

Such is the wealth of material, such the variety of world-known names, that it is impossible to do more than give a brief outline of the lives and works of a few men who were labouring quietly in the studio, the library, and the laboratory, far from the turmoil of both wordy and manual warfare. In England no great musician had arisen, but on the Continent Mozart had finished his life's work two years before the war commenced, and his pupil Beethoven was already famous before the death of Pitt. Unfortunately he early suffered from deafness, which continued to the end of his life to

baffle medical skill, and rendered him despondent, distrustful, and miserable to an extreme degree, but fortunately did not deter him from his work. Of an intensely emotional nature, subject to the most violent extremes of feelings and with strong republican sympathies, it is the more to be wondered at that his music does not reflect to a great extent the wild, turbid, disordered passion of the time. He was a great admirer of Bonaparte, and at the suggestion of Bernadotte, the Ambassador at Vienna in 1803, composed and dedicated the Heroic Symphony in his honour; but when he heard that the First Consul had assumed the title of Emperor he was so enraged that he tore off the title-page with Bonaparte upon it, and would not for months allow the work to be named. His next great work was the opera "Fidelio," produced in November 1805, a week after the entry of Napoleon's troops into Vienna, but as the audience consisted chiefly of French soldiers who neither understood the language nor the music, it was a failure, and it was not until the following year that it met with the reception it merited. In 1806 appeared the Symphony in B flat, soon to be followed by the Symphony in C minor, which is thought by many to be his greatest masterpiece, but probably the most popular of all is the Pastoral Symphony, with its pure and simple representations of Nature's sounds. Beethoven's music marks an important epoch both in the art of composition, and in that of imbuing music with material meaning. It was the birth of the modern art, developed so powerfully since by Wagner, of causing musical sounds to convey distinct messages. Neither a discussion of Beethoven nor a dissertation on the philosophy of his composition properly belongs to a history of England, but these few words may be permitted, perhaps, concerning the most widely-known and loved composer in this country.

Gainsborough, who may justly be described as the father of English painters, had died in 1788, but the effect of his works influenced the whole principle of painting throughout the last century. He it was who, more than any one artist at that time, strove to represent things as they are, and not as they were supposed to be by classic tradition. He indeed represents the awakening of art to the demand for reality

but yet never sacrifices feeling to portraiture; and while bestowing upon his sitters such grace and dignity as befitted them, breathes his own powerful personality into every work. He was one of the original members of the Royal Academy and was a regular exhibitor until 1784. Fortunate in being patronised by the King, he became the fashionable portrait painter of the day. Many of his works are at the Hampton Court Gallery, the National Gallery, and in private collections, but there is a considerable doubt as to the fate of some of them, particularly the portraits of the Duchess of Devonshire, and as he never signed and seldom dated anything it is difficult to say at what stage of his career many of his most famous pictures were painted.

When Gainsborough died Turner was only thirteen years old, having been born in 1775, but he early showed signs of his genius, and was admitted as an exhibitor at the Academy at the age of sixteen.

At first he devoted his attention almost exclusively to water-colours, but his earliest oil painting was exhibited in 1797. It is a "View of the Thames at Millbank by moonlight," and is now in the National Gallery. Two years later he exhibited his "Battle of the Nile," and was elected an Associate, being afterwards advanced to a full Academician in 1802. Turner at first painted in the style of Wilson, but soon developed one peculiar to himself, as is shown in "Calais Pier" and "Crossing the Brook." In 1807 Turner was elected Professor of Perspective at the Royal Academy, for which post he was peculiarly fitted, since throughout, from the first to the last, his drawing was always accurate, although in his later works this is not always at once apparent to the uninitiated. It was this faculty of accurate drawing, as shown particularly in his celebrated series of etchings, combined with an extraordinary gift of lighting and colouring, which caused Turner to be unique as an artist. As he advanced in years his works show a broader and grander conception, and a splendour of colouring which is unrivalled. It is difficult to extol any one of his many paintings without mentioning all, but perhaps "Ulysses deriding Polyphemus," the "Approach to Venice," "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," and "The Fighting *Temeraire*," are the most widely known and

admired. Apart from his art there is little that was interesting in his life. He visited France and Switzerland in 1801 or 1802, and travelled to Italy three times. In 1812 he built a house and gallery in Queen Anne Street, which he retained all his life; but lived at first at Twickenham, and afterwards in a small house at Chelsea, near Battersea Bridge, under the assumed name of Booth, and here it was that he lived for the greater part of his life. Regarded from a material standpoint, Turner chiefly excelled in drawing, lighting, and colouring, the three chief arts of the painter, but there is far more than mere optical perfection contained in his works, for they possess the rare power of exciting appropriate feeling. Witness, for example, his train on the Great Western Railway, and a sensation of whirling noisy speed is conjured up; or, to occasion an absolutely opposite emotion, look at the fighting *Temeraire* being slowly and placidly but sadly towed to her last berth. It is this power of arousing emotion that distinguishes the artist from the mere painter; but, in addition, there is the strength and expression which is not so much caused by the subject as by the artist's personality, and this is impossible to describe, but as we possess so many of his works each can easily judge of it for himself. "A picture of Titian's, or a Greek statue, or a Greek coin, or a Turner landscape, expresses delight in the perpetual contemplation of a good and perfect thing. That is an entirely moral quality—it is the taste of the angels."[1]

Metaphysics has never appealed strongly to the Anglo-Saxon race as a whole, but nevertheless there are two English names which will always be associated with this subject. To appreciate the reasoning of Bishop Berkeley it is necessary to acquire a knowledge of physiology and psychology, and suffice it to say here that the conclusion at which he arrived was briefly that nothing can be proved to exist which is unperceived by the mind, and that, therefore, matter cannot be proved to exist at all, but only the ideas which arise in the mind.[2] This conception of knowledge marks an epoch in metaphysics, and although the plain man in the seventeenth century considered the whole argument as a logomachy,

[1] Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olives."
[2] "Principles of Human Knowledge."

nevertheless the strength of the reasoning was admitted then as now by those who were interested in the subject. Berkeley was born in 1684, became a fellow of Trinity, Dublin, and afterwards Bishop of Cloyne. His teaching has since received the name of idealism, but that term is now generally used to express several other and far different thoughts and conceptions.

Most of the metaphysicians hail from the Teutonic race, but besides Berkeley we possess another great thinker who arrived at another conclusion, or, to be more strictly accurate, stated the same truths in different words. Hume, historian and metaphysician, was born some twenty-seven years after Berkeley, and at the early age of twenty-six gave his conception of human knowledge to the world, which at first was not apparently greatly impressed by it. His philosophy of knowledge may be summed up in his own words: "What never was seen or heard of may yet be conceived, nor is anything beyond the power of thought except what implies an absolute contradiction. But though our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find upon a nearer examination that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses or experience."[1]

From metaphysics to history and politics is not uncommon, and in 1754 Hume published the first volume of his "History of England," which contains the reigns of James I. and Charles I. The reception of this work was by no means encouraging, and his own description of it may be cited as an example of the exaggerations in the history itself, "I was assaulted by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation. English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig and Tory, churchman and sectary, free thinker and religionist, patriot and courtier, united against the man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I. and the Earl of Strafford."[2] It would probably be nearer

[1] Hume, "Inquiry concerning Human Understanding. Section of the Origin of Ideas."

[2] Hume, "My own Life." "History of England," vol. i. p. 12.

the truth to say that no one outside a small circle of friends heard of the work, for only forty-five copies were sold in London in the first year, and in these days the newspapers did not devote much space to reviews of books. However, the two Primates, Herring and Stone, seem to have sent him messages approving of his work. The rest of the History followed at short intervals, and throughout the whole the strong personality of the author is apparent. He was a strong partisan, and wrote as a high Tory, nor had he in any great degree the first essentials of a historian, patience in research and accuracy in narration. Having said this it is necessary to explain wherein lies the greatness of Hume's works and why he should be still read as a classic. His style is in every way wonderful, admirable, and unique. His descriptions are vivid and clear as crystal, and his language powerful without being forced, flows gracefully along in its natural channel without artifice or affectation.

The History was finished in 1761, when Hume had reached the age of fifty, and two years afterwards he accompanied Lord Hertford, the British Ambassador, to Paris, with the prospect of being appointed Secretary to the Embassy. For some months, indeed, he actually carried out the duties of Ambassador, which he appears to have done in a highly creditable and business-like manner. In 1766 he returned to Edinburgh, and in the next year was appointed Under Secretary of State under Marshall Conway, but resigned it two years after. In August 1775 Hume died, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

Ardent churchmen regarded him as a heretic, the Whigs as a bigoted Tory; and he naturally aroused the enmity of those whose prejudices he despised, and whose weaknesses he exposed; but although he had and has still many admirers, very few would agree with Adam Smith that his friend approached as nearly to the "character of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty would permit."[1]

Dr. William Robertson was ambitious to be a reliable historian, and sacrificed style to accuracy, whereas Hume desired to be a brilliant author, and sacrificed accuracy to

[1] "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. xxviii. p. 224.

style, and both have gained their ends. Robertson's first historical work, in two volumes, was the "History of Scotland during the reigns of Mary and of King James VI." In 1762 he became Principal of Edinburgh University. Seven years later he published his "History of Charles V.," and eight years after that his "History of America." He died in 1793, and is now rarely read because his style is not attractive.

But, while Hume was earning the reputation of being an agnostic, for attempting to show that nothing can be known except such as is capable of giving rise to ideas which were originally derived from the sense impressions, another philosopher was collecting the evidence in favour of Christianity.

William Paley, D.D., was the son of one of the minor canons of Peterborough, and was born in 1743. He entered Christ's College, Cambridge, at the age of seventeen, and took his B.A. degree with high honours three years later, and after taking holy orders was elected a Fellow of his college in 1766. For ten years he remained at Cambridge, lecturing upon Moral Philosophy, but then retired to the living of Musgrave in Cumberland, and soon afterwards became Archdeacon of Carlisle. In 1785 he published his first important work, the "Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy," which sold for the large sum of £1000, and at once obtained an extensive circulation. But the work on which his fame chiefly rests is the "Evidences of Christianity," published in 1794. This latter was eagerly accepted as a standard work, in support of the Christian revealed religion, at a time when revolution of accepted ideas as well as of political states was much feared by those in authority.

Paley does not commence with the philosophy of ideas, but with the bold statement that the question lies between Christianity and no religion, "for if the Christian religion be not credible, no one with whom we have to do will support the pretensions of any other."[1] He then *supposes* that the world had a Creator who "consulted for the happiness of his sensitive creation," and that a part of the creation were endowed with free will, who were intended for a "second

[1] Paley's "Evidences of Christianity," Preparatory Considerations.

state of existence in which their situation will be regulated by their behaviour in the first state." Suppose it to be of the utmost importance to the subjects of this dispensation "to know what is intended for them," but suppose, "nevertheless, almost the whole race, either by the imperfection of their faculties, or for some other reason, to want this knowledge." Under these circumstances is it improbable that a revelation should be made? or that God should interpose for such a purpose, and if He designed for mankind a future state is it unlikely he should acquaint them with it. "We assert only, that in miracles adduced in support of revelation, there is not any such antecedent improbability as no testimony can surmount," he states, and continues that any one who accepts the suppositions can easily accept the miracles. This position is obviously unassailable, for he who has faith can believe anything. "As Mr. Hume has represented the question, miracles are alike incredible to him who is previously assured of the constant agency of a Divine Being, and to him who believes that no such Being exists in the Universe." . . . This surely cannot be a correct statement.[1]

The whole of the work is an endeavour to show that many of the original witnesses of the Christian miracles passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and that they submitted from the same motives to new rules of conduct. Secondly, that there is not satisfactory evidence that persons professing to be original witnesses of other miracles in their nature as certain as these are, have ever acted in the same manner.

But enough, I think, has been said to give some idea of the condition of thought relating to metaphysics and religion among the highly-educated at this period.

The founder of quite a different school of philosophy to any before known, Mr. Jeremy Bentham, was a distinguished Oxford graduate and a barrister, who, however, soon retired from the legal profession since he was called by the most imperative of all summons, the irresistible desire to write. His first work appeared in 1776, and is entitled "A Fragment on Government," and this was soon followed by his best

[1] Paley's "Evidences of Christianity," Preparatory Considerations, p. 5.

known work, "The Principles of Morals and Legislation," which was first printed in 1780, but not published until nine years later. The leading principle of Bentham's philosophy is, that the goal of all human actions and morality is happiness—meaning by that pleasure and exemption from pain—and that therefore the chief object of all morals and legislation ought to be to insure the greatest happiness of the greatest number.[1] Broadly speaking, every one would agree with this, but it is obvious that there are many practical difficulties in the way of any one who should amuse himself by endeavouring to draw up a code of laws to insure such a condition, for the reason that every person's idea of happiness not only differs from moment to moment, according to various physiological and psychological needs, but also because each person's idea of happiness differs from that of his neighbour. Probably the nearest approach to universal happiness that it is possible to attain, would be to insure to each person the maximum amount of liberty consistent with the welfare of the community at large, and that is the aim of Governments—at least in theory. We need not delay here to discuss the various methods invented by Bentham of proving by mathematical means that happiness is the *summum bonum*, since it requires no proof.

This philosopher, however, by no means exerted all his talents in such propositions, for his works on law, the "Rationale of Judicial Evidence," the "Plan of a Judicial Establishment," the "Constitutional Code," and many others, are accepted as works of distinguished practical merit, by those best competent to judge on such subjects; and many measures which have since been accomplished by modern legislation, were first proposed or suggested by Jeremy Bentham. The central idea of his philosophy, indeed, is followed by the modern "utilitarian" school, of whom James Mill, Dupont, John Stuart Mill, and others are well known disciples.

The science of economy may be considered to date back

[1] This main idea occurred to the earliest philosophers, and is treated at length in the "Nicomachean Ethics" of Aristotle (Book I. sections 2 to 13), but Bentham was the first thinker who endeavoured to reduce it to mathematical terms.

to the time when the primitive savage exchanged his cow for a canoe, but when primitive communities first came into being, and laws were made regulating barter and exchange, then sprang into being political economy. Thus the wealth of communities was affected to a certain extent by the laws enforced by Governments, and such an ancient writer as Aristotle frequently refers to the subject in his "Ethics" and "Politics." Throughout the Middle Ages the Governments of countries were regarded more in the light of parents than as spokesmen for the people, and it was the chief part of their duty to insure their prosperity. This they endeavoured to do by enacting laws which seemed to them to enhance the chances of gain, either by excluding other nations from their markets or by prohibiting the export of goods, and thus, as they thought, accumulating wealth at home.

The fallacies of such systems were first exposed by Adam Smith, and are recognised as such now by all students of the subject. There are certain natural laws regulating the social conduct of all, but the more complex society becomes, the more is artifice substituted for nature, until we can almost state that it is natural to be artificial. This applies not only to social conduct but to most of the affairs of State, and it cannot therefore be a matter for wonderment that an attempt to regulate the natural laws of economy was made under the impression that by so doing prosperity would be insured. Adam Smith recognised that an opposite result was produced, and advocated the natural principles of political economy—unrestricted exchange.

The advantages of free trade had already been pointed out by Sir Dudley North in his "Discourse upon Trade, Interest, Coinage," published in 1691, and by other writers, but Adam Smith was the first who brought the doctrine home to the minds of all students of the subject. He was born at Kirkcaldy on June 5, 1723, and was educated at the grammar school of that town, and at Glasgow University, but afterwards proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford, where he spent seven years studying ancient and modern languages, mathematics and natural philosophy. In 1751 he was elected Professor of Logic at Glasgow, and in the following

year was appointed to the Chair of Moral Philosophy, which he filled for thirteen years. He then travelled in various parts of France and Switzerland, but returned after three years in order to prepare his great work, "The Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations," better known as the "Wealth of Nations," which appeared in 1776. It at once attracted the attention of politicians of all parties, and, as we have already shown, the principles advocated were afterwards embraced by Pitt, Grenville, Fox, Dundas, and others, although the first named was a little afraid of practically applying them to the laws regulating the supply of food; nor was it indeed until half a century had elapsed that common sense reasoning was able to overcome prejudice and imaginary class interests.

The two years after the publication of his great work Smith spent in London, but was then appointed Rector of Glasgow University, and Commissioner of Customs for Scotland, on which he returned to Edinburgh, where he resided until his death in 1790. It is not surprising that the principle of free trade should have been opposed at a time when men were fearful of any change in existing institutions, nor is it curious that protective tariffs are still imposed in many countries. The reasons for this are, first, because it is thought by many that manufacture is the chief source of wealth, and for that purpose manufactures are protected; and, secondly, it is still a rooted idea that if money can be retained in a country, the nation will therefore grow more wealthy.

A very little reasoning shows the fallacy of both these ideas in the case of England. It is obvious that we could not feed the population from the produce grown on the land, and so must import food stuffs; and for our greatest manufacture, cotton, all the raw products must be brought into the country. Nor are the advantages of protective tariffs apparent in our colonies. The Australian, for example, is engaged in producing food stuff, or in digging gold, both of which he wishes to export, and receive the equivalent in money. He has then to pay for his rent, food, furniture, and clothes, and if he has to give twice the amount for the last two necessities, because protective tariffs are instituted

against the importation of clothes and furniture, it is plain he has to charge more highly for the mutton and butter he exports, and thus runs the risk of losing his trade. If he exports gold, which has a fixed value, he is obviously still worse off. On the other hand, if it is possible to conceive a country which could produce all the commodities it required as cheaply at home as it could procure them elsewhere, then it would do no harm to shut out foreign competition. This condition is absolutely impossible to be realised anywhere, owing to a variety of causes. Of these the quantity of products beneath the surface of the earth, such as minerals and coals, the fertility of the earth due to climate, humidity, &c., the working abilities of the inhabitants, and the facilities of transport, are the most important. Even in a vast Continent such as the United States it is still impossible to manufacture clothes, cutlery, and many other necessities as cheaply as they could be imported. A protective tariff compels the people to pay more than their natural price for such necessities, and thus the price of labour and of all other commodities also rises, so that, although a person's income may be greater, he may not be able to command so much comfort and luxury as he could with a smaller income in a free trade country.

It is obviously necessary to raise revenue, but that is no reason why tariffs should be arranged to keep money in the country. Capital should be used in such a way as to return as much interest as possible, and if invested abroad so as to return 5 per cent., instead of at home, where only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. can be obtained, the owner has twice the income to spend, and the country is in this way enriched.

Although in a history of the commencement of the century it is not the place to speak of the results obtained at the end, yet we may be allowed briefly to refer to the effects of free trade in England, in order to prove that the wealth of the country at the present moment is to a great extent due to the application of the principles so ably stated and advocated by Adam Smith. By buying everything in the cheapest market, living becomes cheaper in England than it could be (*ceteris paribus*) in countries with a protective tariff. If necessary, a person can live on beef from America, mutton from Australia, and wheat grown in Russia,

cheaper in England than he can in either of those countries, and clothes of a similar quality cost him about half as much at home as abroad. The result is that so much capital has been accumulated that it is impossible to find good paying investments in England, and it is, therefore, applied to build American railways, to dig gold mines, and to afford loans to foreign Governments. The amount of British capital invested abroad is about 1750 millions, and about 50 millions is added to it every year.[1] The interest on this large sum is to a great extent spent in England, and to provide for the wants of these capitalists vast quantities of commodities must be imported. Thus it happens that the value of the imports exceeds that of the exports by about £168,000,000 per annum.[2] But besides the owners of capital invested abroad, great numbers of people are employed in the business of transport exchange and distribution of foreign produce, and in the central English offices of industries carried on in other countries. The tendency of England now, therefore, is to become a large clearing-house, market, and bank, and this is shown by the fact that the commercial class, *i.e.* merchants, money-dealers, bankers, and those engaged in the work of transport by sea and land, increases in number more rapidly than any other class of the community.

England may be regarded, in order to elucidate this point, as a capitalist living cheaply and lending the surplus of his income to a friend equally rich, but who is compelled to pay double for the same style of living abroad. In course of time it is obvious the capitalist living in England would acquire the whole of his friend's fortune. It is usually the aim and object of nations, especially young ones, to export a greater value of goods than they import, and by this means they expect to grow rich; just as a tradesman must at first sell his goods at a greater price than he pays for them, but when he has made his fortune he can retire from business and lend his money to others, and, provided he does not spend more than the income derived from the interest, he will remain equally rich without buying or selling for profit at all.

[1] These figures are approximate only. They are based on estimates by Sir R. Giffen, and by the "Economist."

[2] This was the excess in 1900.

The same applies to manufacture. A man may invest £20,000 in a cotton mill in Lancashire or in Bombay, in a gold mine in Australia, or a coal mine in Wales, but if he receives £2000 per annum interest, and spends it in England, the wealth of the country is not therefore affected. We sometimes hear a great deal of the diminution in value of our exports, and of the loss of English trade abroad, but that is only to be expected if it pays better to invest capital in industries carried on elsewhere; and so long as we can live cheaper in England than elsewhere, and do not spend more than our income, it is quite certain that we are not becoming less wealthy.

It is sometimes urged that we are living on our accumulated capital, and that the excess of our imports over exports means that the country is losing its wealth. This is impossible for two reasons, (1) every class of the community earns more money than it did twenty years ago, as is proved by the income tax and by the wages paid; (2) if it were the case that we were spending more than we earned the balance would have ultimately to be paid in gold, and, consequently, the country would be denuded of that metal. There are other indications that we are not spending the capital accumulated by our fathers, of which the yearly increase in the value of the probate duties is not the least important.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the custom of creating and holding capital in other countries, and then spending the income in free-trade England is extremely important to our national economy. It seems, therefore, that the application of the principle of free trade has had, and is still having, far greater results than either its founder or any of his supporters expected.

The doctrine of Malthus that while the population tends to increase in a geometrical ratio, the means of subsistence can hardly increase in an arithmetical, created a great sensation when first published in his work "An Essay on the Principle of Population as it affects the Future Improvement of Society," and even now this main principle is still popular amongst those who have not studied political economy. Undoubtedly, as Mr. J. S. Mill says, "Mr. Malthus laid no stress on this unlucky attempt to give numerical precision to

things which do not admit of it, and every person capable of reasoning must see that it is wholly superfluous to his argument."[1]

If England or any other small area were surrounded by an insurmountable wall the increase in population would undoubtedly be speedily checked by the "positive" factor of starvation, but in these days of steamships and railways, when, for all practical purposes, the whole world forms the food supply for the whole population, we see signs not only that the means of subsistence do increase in ratio to the population, but that the standard of living is actually higher in every class than ever before. On the other hand, we know that millions have perished from famine in China and India in the past, and even now, if the latter country were not under the rule and protection of Great Britain or some other great European Power, the death-rate from famine would at times undoubtedly be very high.

[1] "Principles of Political Economy," p. 249.

CHAPTER XX

Watt and the steam-engine—His principles still acted upon—Arkwright and spinning by rollers—The textile industries—Factories and Trades' Unions—Sir Humphry Davy—Joseph Black—Jenner and vaccination—Cowpox and inoculation—Population of Great Britain, and chief causes of death—The effects of vaccination on the death-rate from smallpox—Literature of the eighteenth century—Poets and prose writers—Sir Walter Scott—Sports and pastimes—Horse-racing, fox-hunting, shooting, cricket, dress, and social manners—Poverty and the Poor Laws—London at the commencement of the nineteenth century.

No invention has contributed to the material comfort and welfare of mankind to such an extent as that of the steam-engine. Modern marine engines, railway locomotives, and the thousands of machines driven by steam as we know them, are the results of years of patient study and experiments by hundreds of mechanical geniuses, but the one person who essentially discovered the fundamental principle of the construction of the steam-engine was James Watt.[1] He was born in Greenock on January 19, 1736, and from earliest boyhood showed a remarkable aptitude for physics, particularly chemistry and electricity. In his sixteenth year he was apprenticed to an instrument-maker in Glasgow, and four years later opened a shop within the precincts of the University in that town. In 1763 John Anderson, who was then Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University, asked him to examine and repair a small model of Newcomen's steam-engine which could never be made to work satisfactorily, and this first directed his attention to the properties of steam, and the imperfections of the engines then invented for converting its power into useful work.

The first engineer to conceive the idea of making steam blow a piston along a cylinder was Denis Papin, who, about the end of the seventeenth century, constructed a working model consisting simply of a cylinder in which was placed

[1] Williamson's "Memorial of the Life of James Watt." Smiles' "Life of Boulton and Watt."

a little water. Fire was then applied to its lower surface, and the water being converted into steam lifted the piston; the fire was then removed and the steam condensed, producing a vacuum, so that the piston was forced down by atmospheric pressure. In 1705 Newcomen, Savery, and Cawley combined the cylinder and piston with the separate boiler and surface condensation, thus producing the atmospheric engine which was used for pumping mines. They afterwards increased the rapidity of condensation by injecting a shower of cold water into the cylinder. The piston rod acted upon a beam at the other end of which was a chain attached to the pump rod. The upstroke of the piston merely raised one end of the beam and depressed the other, thus allowing the pump rod to descend, and the actual work was done during the down stroke, caused by atmospheric pressure, which lifted the pump end of the beam, and with it the pump rod and the column of water to be raised. The pressure of steam in the boiler was therefore required to be only 1 lb. on the square inch. This primitive machine was so altered and improved by Watt as to entirely transform its character from an atmospheric into a steam-engine. He first of all discovered that there was great waste of energy in alternately heating and cooling the cylinder, and that it should always be kept hot, so he effected condensation in a separate chamber. The water used to condense the steam and the condensed steam itself was removed from this chamber by an air-pump, and in order still further to economise heat, this hot water was returned to the boiler.

Watt next devised the plan of making the pressure of the steam force the piston down as well as up, admitting it at each end of the cylinder alternately, while the exhausted steam on the other side of the piston was driven into the condenser. He further introduced the important improvement of shutting off communication with the boiler before the piston had completed its stroke, thus allowing the steam to exert its expansive elastic force. By this means more energy is extracted from the steam, and a less amount is used, while at the same time the momentum of the piston remains steady and does not increase during the stroke.[1]

[1] See Stuart's "Descriptive History of the Steam-Engine."

It will thus be seen that the steam-engine of Watt has practically not been altered in a single essential detail during the last hundred years, although now we have triple and quadruple expansion engines in which the whole of the energy of the steam at very high pressure is utilised before it is converted again into water.

It is, however, by no means only necessary to invent a machine of surpassing excellence, for then arises the necessity of funds to construct it, and Watt was fortunate in finding Dr. John Roebuck, who appreciated his work, and was enterprising enough to assist him in further experiments. With his help Watt constructed an engine and patented it in 1769; but Roebuck, being unfortunate in his mining speculations, was compelled to sell his share to Mr. Matthew Boulton, with whom Watt remained in partnership, at Soho, near Birmingham, until 1800, when he retired from business. The legal and commercial difficulties were very great, and before the patentees received any return for their enterprise they had spent over £47,000 in constructing and perfecting the engine, in obtaining from Parliament an extension of the term of their patent, and in legal proceedings against infringements of it. At length, after a series of trials extending from 1792 to 1799, an unanimous opinion was given clearly establishing their rights. A few years before his death the highest honour usually conferred in England on men of literature and science was offered to him, but he decided to decline it. He died in 1819, in his eighty-third year, and five years after a subscription was raised for a statue, by Chantrey, which is now in Westminster Abbey. Another one, by the same sculptor, was erected by his son in the parish church of Handsworth, where he was interred.[1]

At the same time lived and worked another great inventor, Arkwright, who was destined to revolutionise the whole trade in textile manufacture.

The invention of the fly-shuttle, by Kay of Bury, had so greatly increased the demand for yarn, that it was soon found to be impossible to meet it by hand labour alone, but until

[1] See "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. lx. p. 51; and Article in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," by his son, James Watt, junior.

1767 spinning was executed wholly by the old hand-wheel.[1] In that year Hargreaves invented the spinning-jenny, which he patented in 1770, but at the same time Arkwright asked a clockmaker named Kay to turn him some pieces of brass, and bend him some wires, and shortly afterwards he gave up his business as a hair-dresser, and devoted his whole time to perfecting the machinery for spinning by rollers. With the aid of Kay the machine was ultimately constructed and set up in the parlour of the house of the Free Grammar School at Preston, the greatest secrecy being observed. Having proved the practical working value of the machine, Arkwright next moved to Nottingham, and, in partnership with Smalley of Preston, erected a spinning-mill between Hockley and Woolpack Lane, a patent being taken out for the machine in 1769. The principle of Arkwright's machine is that of spinning by rollers moving at different degrees of speed, and thus drawing the rove to the requisite degree of fineness necessary for twisting, which is accomplished by spindles placed in front of each set of rollers. It has not been superseded, nor to any substantial extent modified, since.

The first spinning-mill was driven by horses, the second by water, and now they are worked by steam. In 1771 Arkwright manufactured ribbed stockings, and two years later used the thread as warp to make calicoes, and thus a pure cotton cloth was produced for the first time in England. This met with a great demand, but was liable to a heavy duty, which had been imposed to protect the woollen manufacturers against the calicoes of India. In 1774 the inventor obtained an Act exempting from extra duty the "new manufacture of stuffs wholly made of raw cotton wool," and during the same year Acts were also passed to prevent "frauds and abuses committed by persons employed in the manufacture of hats, and in the woollen, linen, fustian, cotton, iron, leather, fur, hemp, flax, mohair and silk manufactures, and for preventing unlawful combinations of journeymen dyers and journeymen hat-pressers, and of all persons employed in the said several manufactures; and for the better

[1] Baines' "History of the Cotton Manufacture," p. 175.

payment of their wages."[1] Heavy penalties were to be inflicted upon any one reeling false or short yarn, and upon the third offence it should be lawful for the justices of the peace to commit to prison for a month with hard labour.

In 1775 Arkwright brought out a patent by which the whole process of yarn manufacture was performed by a succession of operations on one machine, and by 1782 he concluded that a business had been formed employing upwards of 5000 persons, and a capital of £200,000. Then followed a series of actions at law against persons who had first infringed the patent, and then accused the inventor of merely using other people's patents and combining them into one machine. In 1785, in the Court of King's Bench, Mr. Justice Buller summed up against him, and the jury brought in a verdict in accordance, so that the patent was cancelled, but only on the technical ground that the specification was deficient. In spite of this the prosperity of Arkwright does not appear to have been affected to any great extent, and for years he fixed the price of cotton twist, all the other spinners conforming to it. In 1790 he erected the steam-engine of Boulton and Watt in his mill at Nottingham, and two years afterwards died, one of the wealthiest commoners in the kingdom.[2]

The construction of the mills of Arkwright completely transformed the industry of the north, and laid the foundation of the modern system of factories with the specialisation of function of the individual. At first the workers were strongly prejudiced against the machinery, and several riots occurred; but gradually they learnt to appreciate the benefits to themselves and to others, although, even at the present day, in many trades the machines are only allowed to be run at a certain speed by the orders of the Trade Unions. This brings us to another indirect result of the invention of cotton and other machinery, and the institution of factory labour. The working men discovered that by combining together into powerful societies they could practically control their own

[1] 14 George III. c. 44.

[2] Guest's "History of the Cotton Manufacture." "National Biography," vol. ii. p. 81.

employers, and regulate for themselves the conditions of employment. "In all cases in which Trade Unions arose the great bulk of the workers had ceased to be independent producers, themselves controlling the processes and owning the materials and the produce of their labour, and had passed into the condition of life-long wage-earners, possessing neither the instruments of production nor the commodity in its finished state."[1]

At the present date the number of members reaches to the total of 4 per cent. of the population, and 20 per cent. of the adult manual workers, and comprises 80 per cent. of the miners, all the cotton spinners, boiler-makers, glass and lace makers,[2] but at the commencement of the last century Trade Unions were in their infancy, and their chief object appears to have been to enforce the laws requiring that each individual should serve an apprenticeship of seven years before entering a trade. These laws had been passed under the Tudors, and had not been repealed, but were to a great extent disregarded. The power of the Unions was, however, not great, as their funds were small, and any attempt to combine, either of masters or men, was rendered illegal by the Act cited above.[3]

Sir Humphry Davy is chiefly remembered as the inventor of the safety-lamp for miners, based on the principle that a flame will not pass through wire gauze and ignite inflammable gases; but his chief discoveries were in chemistry, and more especially in electro-chemical science. Born in 1778, at Penzance, he was at the age of seventeen apprenticed to a surgeon and apothecary, and three years later was appointed by Dr. Beddoes to take charge of the Pneumatic Institution which he had founded at Bristol. In 1800 he published a work entitled "Researches Chemical and Philosophical, chiefly concerning Nitrous Oxide and its Respiration," in which he detailed several interesting experiments he had conducted on himself. In the following year he gave his first lecture at the Royal Institution, and in 1802 was appointed Professor. Five years later he announced the important discovery that the fixed alkalies were decom-

[1] Webb's "History of Trades Unionism," p. 24. [2] Ibid.
[3] 14 George III. c. 44.

posed by galvanism, and that their metal bases were sodium and potassium. Many other important chemical discoveries were described and published in his "Elements of Chemical Philosophy" and his "Elements of Agricultural Chemistry," in which he endeavoured to instruct farmers to carry out their work in a scientific and rational manner. He became President of the Royal Society in 1820, and was created a baronet. His useful life was terminated in 1829 at Geneva, and a handsome statue to his memory was erected nearly half a century later in his native town.

Joseph Black was another renowned physicist who lived during the eighteenth century, and also was destined, at first, for the medical profession. His chief discoveries relate to the science of heat, but he also advanced chemical knowledge in many directions.

The greatest discovery which has ever been effected in medical science is undoubtedly that vaccination is able to prevent smallpox. Many and great improvements in the science and art of medicine and surgery have been made since, but although the nature and causes of most diseases are now known, this is the only treatment which has been followed by the practical eradication of a complaint which at the same time was one of the commonest and most fatal known. The man who was destined thus to be one of the greatest benefactors of his race, Edward Jenner, was born at Berkeley in Gloucestershire in 1749.[1] He was at first apprenticed to a surgeon at Sodbury, near Bristol, but afterwards continued his studies under John Hunter in London, and became a practical anatomist, a careful and observant experimenter, and a sound pathologist. For twenty years he practised medicine in Gloucestershire, but retired in 1792, and it was shortly afterwards that he made his famous discovery, but since the early days of his apprenticeship the connection between smallpox and cowpox had attracted his attention.

It was regarded as a tradition in his part of the country that any one who had cowpox could not "catch" smallpox, and Jenner thought there might be some scientific reason

[1] "Life of Jenner," by John Baron. "National Biography," vol. xxix. p. 321.

for this idea, although the belief was usually regarded as due to a coincidence exaggerated by superstition. His researches caused him first to discover that cows were subject to two eruptive diseases of the udders which were capable of producing sores on the hands of those employed in milking, but that it was only one of these diseases, and only when the virus in the pustule was in a certain condition, which was capable of affording protection from smallpox. In 1788 he made a drawing of the casual disease as it occurred on the hands of the milkers, and showed it to Sir Everard Home and others, when the subject attracted some attention, but it was not until 1796 that Jenner was able to institute the first experiment which proved that this disease might be communicated by artificial inoculation. A boy of the name of Phipps was inoculated in the arm with the virus from a pustule on the hand of a young woman who was infected by her master's cows. The pustules which were produced bore a close resemblance to those found in smallpox in some of their stages, but the absolute proof of the efficacy of the treatment was shown when the boy was inoculated with the smallpox virus, and no effect was produced.

The inoculation of smallpox had been introduced into England by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu about 1721, the method having long been practised in the East. The principle is that if a portion of the virus is removed from the pustule of a patient with smallpox and inoculated under the skin of a healthy person, a modified form of the disease is produced, and afterwards protection is enjoyed from the severe variety. It was not attended with much success, the results being very unsatisfactory, so that it was soon superseded by vaccination; but it was useful in the case of the boy Phipps as showing that he had been rendered insusceptible to the artificial disease, and thus also to the natural form of smallpox. The virulence of this terrible malady is proved by the mortality tables at the beginning of the century. The population of Great Britain in 1801 is estimated to have been about 9,800,000. A table of statistics for London in the *Annual Register* shows that from December 13, 1804, to December 17, 1805, there were

20,295 births, 10,513 being males and 9782 females. The burials during the same period were 17,565, of whom 8874 were males and 8691 females. The classification of the diseases which caused the deaths is not a very good one, and now many diseases classed together as All Fevers or Convulsions would undoubtedly be differentiated into many distinct complaints, but there is no doubt that smallpox was particularly well known. Of the chief diseases causing death during this period consumption ranks first with 3452, convulsions next with 3053, and smallpox next with 1685, followed by all fevers with 1307, and aged 1452.[1] Convulsions undoubtedly included several distinct diseases of childhood, and so we can safely conclude that smallpox was the second most fatal disease. But whereas consumption is still the cause of a greater number of deaths than any other disease, smallpox, instead of ranking second, is now practically the least fatal disease known.

To attain this grand result much effort was required; objections were numerous, and many rival claims to the discovery were set up, but a high tribute to Jenner was paid when in 1799 a large number of leading physicians and surgeons signed an earnest expression of their confidence in the efficacy of cowpox as a prophylactic. Honours were then showered on the discoverer, and Parliament, in 1802, voted him £10,000, to be followed in 1807 by another £20,000. Jenner died of apoplexy in 1823, at Berkeley, and statues to his memory have been erected at Boulogne and in London.

Besides these great discoveries many ingenious people were at this time inventing and improving machinery, and methods to render work more perfect and less arduous, and to improve in a thousand different ways the comforts and healthiness of our existence. It is interesting to observe for what objects patents were granted, and 1804 may be taken as a typical year. Ten patents were in connection with metal industries, and eight were concerned with improvements in the manufacture of yarn, cotton, wool, and wearing apparel. Others related to agriculture, shipping, optical instruments, watch-making, steam-engines, cask-making and

[1] *Annual Register*, 1805, p. 580.

brewing, harness-making, printing, and various domestic articles. There were, of course, in these days as now numbers of patents granted for objects which would never see the light of day, such as a shield to resist pike, sword, and bayonet thrusts, invented by a staymaker, but on the whole the ideas of the inventors were probably more practicable than now. It was, indeed, the birth of the century which will always stand out in history as the greatest era of scientific material discovery ever known; when the forces of heat, electricity, light, and sound were first understood and reduced to rational order from the semi-superstitious awe with which they were regarded in the Middle Ages, and utilised for the practical advancement of the health, wealth, comfort, and pleasure of mankind.

Literature during the eighteenth century showed a marked development, but in no special direction, the poetic spirit not being active for years after the death of Pope. But there are as many classes and styles of poetry as there are of music, each of which appeals to a certain number of people, and the poets of this era who are most widely known and appreciated now are Robert Burns, William Cowper, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Wordsworth.

Prose fiction could be divided into as many classes as poetry, and no definite spirit is shown as illustrative of the age. The materialistic realism of Fielding is as different to the historical romanticism of Sir Walter Scott as the hard analysis of Smollett is to the gentle portraiture of Jane Austen. No one characteristic can be discovered common to these writers, for each one showed a marked individualism, and there is no trace of the influence of schools of thought or of writing to create sensation and circulation.

Sir Walter Scott was born in 1771, and did not early show any marked literary instincts. He had no ability for the classics, never even learning the Greek alphabet, and although he afterwards acquired sufficient knowledge of French and Italian to read those languages, he was never a good linguist. Educated to be a barrister he was duly called at the age of twenty-one, but his legal studies were at this time subordinated to his researches into antiquarian knowledge. The French Revolution stimulated his patriotic ardour greatly, and

although at first a writer for the newly-established *Edinburgh Review*, he afterwards developed into a strong Tory. Fortunately his uncle left him sufficient property to render him, with the aid of his wife's annuity, independent of his profession, and he was thus enabled to devote his whole time to literature. The first two volumes of the "Border Minstrelsy" were published in 1802, and the third followed in the next year. For this work he received £500 from Messrs. Longmans. Three years later he was working at "Waverley" and "Dryden." Scott was an extremely hard worker and quick writer, producing his novels at the rate of nearly one a year. In 1820 he was created a baronet by the Prince Regent, this date well marking the height of his popularity and fame. Twelve years later he died at the age of sixty-one.

Of the national sports and pastimes horse-racing was one of the most popular, Newmarket being the chief centre. Racing had taken place on the heath since about 1640, but the round course was not made until 1807. During the war horse-racing was seriously affected by the general poverty, large numbers of brood-mares, foals, and yearlings being advertised for sale. It is of interest to note that the Scottish breed of horses was supposed to be the finest, and little favour was shown to those of Irish extraction. The passion for betting was very great among the upper classes, but since there was no telegraph and few evening papers the "punting" of small sums by the working people probably did not exist.

Fox-hunting was almost exclusively reserved for the aristocratic and wealthy classes, but many famous packs were in existence. The Pytchley had been hunted by the Spencer family for over fifty years, the Quorn had been governed by the renowned Meynell for forty-seven years, and the Belvoir was also approaching its jubilee in 1800, but the Cottesmore and Bicester had only just come into existence.

About the year 1800 shooting was greatly affected by the introduction of the double-barrelled gun, and a few years later the flint lock was perfected. Norfolk and Suffolk were the best counties for small game, and the bags made were very large considering that the game was shot over dogs.

Cricket was already beginning to assume a scientific aspect,

although the chief object of the players seemed to be hard, straight hitting. For this purpose the bats were curved in the blade, and the bowling was entirely under hand. The M.C.C. was founded in 1787, when Thomas Lord made a ground on the site which is now Dorset Square, but he was obliged to move it in 1814 to the present position.

Among the indirect results of the French Revolution and the war was the change in manners and customs brought about by the heavy income tax and other unusual charges. Foreign travel being impossible, it became fashionable to frequent the English watering-places, especially Brighton and Weymouth, which were favourite resorts of the King. We have already noticed the alteration in diet occasioned by the scarcity of flour, and to this same reason is attributed the revolution in head-dress, the men ceasing to wear powdered wigs and the women powdered "heads."[1] The whole tendency, indeed, was towards simplicity. Court dress and swords, which had been the fashion in Parliament, were gradually abolished in favour of top-boots and tail coats; trousers superseded knee-breeches, and the modern high silk hat commenced to be worn.

The dress of women, which steadily passes through regular cycles from close fitting to crinolines, at the commencement of the century was designed to show the actual figure of the wearer, but the waist was only indicated by a sash under the arms. Leghorn picture hats were worn, as also poke bonnets. In evening dress the low-necked bodice came into fashion, and the hair, which was dressed on the top of the head in a Grecian coiffure, was completed by a bristle plume or a bunch of feathers standing erect in front.

In society conversation was freer, and topics were openly discussed which are now carefully avoided or merely alluded to in veiled terms, and there is no doubt that the average gentleman of 1800 would create a sensation in the society of to-day, if he could suddenly return with his manners unchanged. It is true his bow was deep, and his gallantry towards women marked, if of a rough type, but his language was usually adorned with expletives, and he was frequently drunk after dinner. Duelling was practised even among serious

[1] "Social England," H. D. Traill, vol. v. p. 494.

politicians, Pitt fighting Tierney in 1798, which caused such a great sensation at the time that Wilberforce gave notice of a motion in the House of Commons against the principle of duels, but was prevented by Pitt from bringing it forward, and the practice continued for many years. Of the social clubs now in existence Arthur's, Boodle's, Brooks', and White's are the only ones which date back before 1800, and these were strictly limited to the aristocratic classes.

While the wealthy had their sports, games, books, and clubs, the poor were sunk into the depths of poverty, owing chiefly to the fact that the increased currency had raised the price of commodities before it had affected wages. The Poor Laws, which had scarcely been altered since the Reformation, were modified in 1782 by Gilbert's Act, which instituted outdoor relief and the system of uniting parishes.

A few years later the Justices at Speenhamland in Berkshire adopted a principle which shows they were more affected by their humanitarian instincts than by their knowledge of economy. They settled what was the minimum on which a man and his family could live, with food at a given price, and when his earnings fell below this, he received help up to that amount from the rates. For each additional child more allowance was made, and the result can easily be anticipated. Nevertheless, the system gradually spread all over the country, directly encouraging reckless and improvident marriages and large families of children, the people being perfectly content to take their "allowance," without being particularly anxious to seek work. From 1783–1785 the poor rate averaged nearly two millions, in 1812 it had reached six millions and a half, while in 1850 it had fallen to £690,000.[1] In the towns the poverty was probably not so great, and London was being rapidly improved by new bridges and streets.

Society life in the capital was much the same as it has been since, except that there was not the same lavish display of wealth, for the rich bankers, manufacturers, and merchants of to-day were only represented by the East India proprietors, who were continually arriving home with fortunes

[1] From "Social England," vol. v. p. 698.

which in that day were regarded as colossal but which now would excite no comment.

London had already extended as far West as Park Lane, but Kensington was still a village, and Bayswater was open fields. The most fashionable quarters then as now were Mayfair and St. James's, Belgravia coming into vogue later. The streets were paved with cobbles, and lighted by lamps, gas not being introduced until 1814. Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres were the two rival houses of entertainment. The latter was acquired by Sheridan in 1775 from Garrick, but he did not prove such a successful manager as a playwright.[1] His chief works, which are still at intervals revived, and never fail to please, are "The Rivals" and the "School for Scandal."[2]

This brief sketch of the social life at the beginning of the nineteenth century shows that most of the customs, institutions, and modes of thought were much the same as now, and although some of the prejudices due to sects and classes have to a certain extent since been broken down, it is doubtful whether our present social system is not more a modification of old ideas than an earnest of the advent of new fundamental principles.

[1] "Life of Sheridan," by Thomas Moore.
[2] "Dramatic Works." Edited by Dr. J. P. Browne.

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END OF VOL. I.

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